# Extension of Reyes' term illegal, says Abat

STORY ON PAGE A2

MAGKAKA-ALAMAN NA NGAYONG HATINGGABI !

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WHAT'S INSIDE

▨ **Left: FVR really in power**
ACROSS / A16
▨ **Israel shuns UN probe team**
WORLD / A12
▨ **Stable interest rates seen**
BUSINESS / B1
▨ **SMB solo leader in PBA**
SPORTS / A23

# Senate race tight, SWS poll indicates

## Edsa forces leading Estrada allies, 7-6

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA
AND CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

**IT LOOKS like a tight battle in the May 14 senatorial elections between candidates identified with Edsa People Power II and allies of ousted President Joseph Estrada.**

Results of a nationwide survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) on Jan. 27-29 showed 7-6 in favor of the so-called "Edsa forces."

Five possible members of the administration's People Power Coalition (PPC), an anti-Estrada senator who is not inclined to join the PPC and five allies of Estrada made it to the "Magic 12," who will serve a full six-year term in the Senate, the survey showed.

Two more possible PPC candidates made it to the winning 13. A 13th slot was created last week to serve out the remaining three years in the Senate of Teofisto Guingona Jr., who is now the Vice President.

Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Franklin Drilon and Rep. Joker Arroyo, key players on the side of the people during the impeachment trial, were the top three choices of the 6,000 respondents polled by the SWS.

The polling firm asked respondents to select as many as 12 from 42 names with the question: "Among the names found in this list, who would you vote for as senators of the Philippines, if elections were held today?"

Sen. Juan Flavier and broadcast personality Noli de Castro tied for Nos. 4 and 5; Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, No. 6; and former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado and lawyer Francis Pangilinan tied for Nos. 7 and 8.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan and his mentor, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, tied

SENATE/ A19

REUTERS

**AID FOR THE WOUNDED**
President Macapagal-Arroyo gives a P30,000 check to a wounded soldier during her visit Saturday at the AFP Medical Center in Quezon City.

## GMA, Erap governance: A study of contrasts

BY AMANDO DORONILA

ANALYSIS

THREE weeks into her assumption of the presidency, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has quickly stamped her leadership style, established her priorities and set the direction for economic recovery.

Although she has stumbled on some of her Cabinet appointments, she has projected a profile of a business-like, hands-on presidency in a race against time to get things moving within her first 100 days.

The profile draws a sharp contrast with the pleasure-seeking culture and perpetual fiesta atmosphere of the deposed administration of Joseph Estrada.

Ms Macapagal is also exhibiting the political touch and shrewdness of her father, President Diosdado Macapagal (1962-65), who was a populist and idealist leader, albeit a pragmatic politician.

First, the style. She is up at 6 a.m. Estrada showed up at his desk at noon.

She has an agenda for the day on her desk, with appointments spelled out. Appointments are carefully screened. The day is a full-working day.

The work ethic has replaced ad hoc, idiosyncratic decision-making. Results are the criteria in this workaholic new culture. Her

GMA/ A20

## Erap advised to have eye treatment here

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

VICE President Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday advised ousted President Joseph Estrada to have his eye ailment treated here, assuring him that the country has qualified doctors and the technology to do it.

But Guingona said Estrada could also have his eye treated abroad on the condition that he will be in the country when cases are filed against him with the Sandiganbayan.

"If he wants to leave and the court allows it, then there is no problem with that," Guingona said.

But Perez said he did not agree with Guingona's suggestion to grant Estrada a special arrangement to enable him to go abroad.

Allowing Estrada to leave will reinforce the people's perception that only the poor are jailed in the country, according to the justice secretary.

"This is the opportunity for the justice system to show that justice is really blind and does not discriminate between the high and mighty and the poor," he said.

Although Estrada's plunder cases are not bailable, Guingona said the ousted President could come up with an arrangement with the anti-graft court.

"Under certain conditions," Estrada can leave the country and be back after the operation, Guingona said in his regular radio program with dzBB. "He can get a special permission from the court and post a bond."

But then, the Vice President said he had been informed by his friends that glaucoma can eas-

ERAP/ A20

## 'Popoy' buried today; work stoppage called

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

ABOUT 40,000 workers are expected to walk out of their offices and factories in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog today to bring slain labor leader Filemon "Popoy" Lagman to his final resting place.

The militant Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, which Lagman founded and headed since 1995, called for a work stoppage this noon, in time for the funeral Mass at the Church of the Holy Sacrifice inside the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

Benjie Velasco, BMP spokesperson, said some 10,000 members of the urban poor group, Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod, would join the workers in the indignation march from the UP to the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

"The employers of these workers have al-

POPOY/ A20

LAGOT SILA SA AKIN ULIT!!

## *Morato back as 'alternative' candidate*

BY JERRY ESPLANADA
AND CHRISTIAN ESGUERRA

THERE are "questionable characters in the Senate who should not be there in the first place," and the bad news is that "they're running for reelection."

And Manuel Morato, former chair and general manager of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, believes he is part of the

MORATO/ A19

# Just call her Vicky, the Firefly Lady

## PMS chief: Advocate now works within the system

BY DONNA S. CUETO
AND PENNIE AZARCON DELA CRUZ

HOW did a physicist and dedicated NGO officer end up becoming chief of the Presidential Management Staff, one of the most controversial posts in Malacañang's recent history?

Vicky Garchitorena, 56, is unfazed to find herself working in what former presidential spokesperson Jerry Barican used to describe as a "snake pit," and in a job once occupied by "Dragon Lady" Leonora de Jesus.

And her friends say the former president of the Ayala Foundation and wife of Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena is not about to become the Palace's next fire-breather.

"If anything, call her the Firefly Lady," Carol Atacador, Garchitorena's childhood friend, former classmate and maid of honor, suggested of the vivacious PMS chief.

Garchitorena, who confesses that she took the job "in the euphoria of the moment," admitted that it was the most difficult decision she has had to make because of financial considerations.

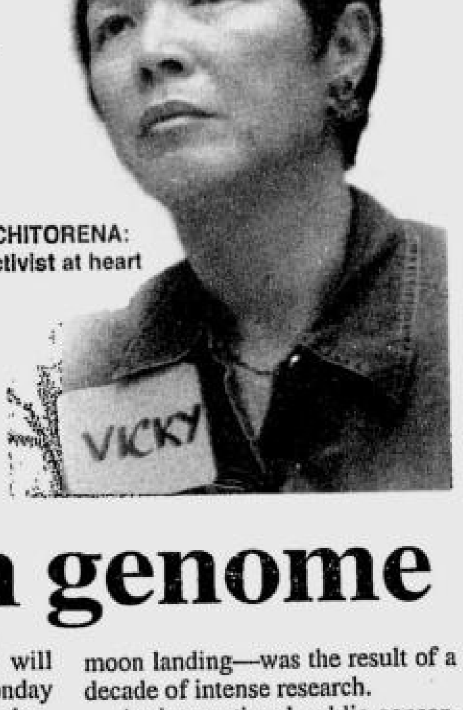
She said she and her husband had a previous arrangement that only one of them would be in government while the other would have to work in a private firm to earn money.

But she is adjusting very well, even to the "much slower computer" that she now uses.

"This is like any other management work," she said, "except that the load rolls down on you like an avalanche. Working 14 hours a day isn't enough because we're doing everything at once."

The young-looking PMS chief, with her ready laughter, is not afraid of the intrigue, controversies and turf wars that had befallen her predecessors. She sounds confident that she can handle the political jockeying and vicious gossip that come with the job.

JUST/ A20



**GARCHITORENA:**
An activist at heart

# Scientists unveil map of human genome

WASHINGTON—Scientists have unveiled the map of the human genome for the first time, raising immense hopes for curing diseases and stopping birth defects, along with fears of genetic discrimination and selective breeding.

The researchers have found that the human genome includes some 30,000 genes, only about three times the number that form the genome of the tiny fruit fly, while the nematode worm boasts some 20,000. Even the *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, a microscopic bacterium, is only a little less complex genetically than man.

A genome is the chemical code needed to build a living creature, whether plant, animal or human. The blueprint comprises DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), a long molecular chain of phosphate and sugar in the shape of a double-helix ladder connected by rungs, called bases.

The formal announcement of the landmark scientific research will take place simultaneously Monday in Washington, Tokyo, London, Paris and Berlin and published in the prestigious Nature and Science magazines.

The deciphering of the human genome—considered the most important scientific event since the moon landing—was the result of a decade of intense research.

An international public consortium and its rival Celera Genomics, a private US firm led by Craig Venter, will both publish "complete" versions of their findings to the scientific community and to everybody

SCIENTISTS/ A21

## Second FRONT PAGE

PAANO NA
NGAYON
'YAN ?

# Reyes' extension illegal–Abat

By Carlito Pablo

**GENERAL Angelo Reyes, whose defection has been ascribed as dealing the deathblow to the disgraced Estrada presidency, may be on his way out as chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.**

This was pointed out yesterday by former defense secretary Fortunato Abat, who said ousted President Estrada's extension on Jan. 19 of Reyes' term to 2002 was unconstitutional.

Emerging as the strongest contender for the post is unheralded People Power II mover Marine Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa, who, according to retired generals, had worked behind the scenes to have the military establishment withdraw its support for Estrada.

Citing provisions of the 1987 Constitution, Abat said in a phone interview that the extension violated the Charter because it was not justified by a war or a national emergency at the time.

"The extension was meant to secure the loyalty of General Reyes," said Abat, chair of the Federation of Retired Commissioned and Enlisted Soldiers who was the first of the retired generals to call on the AFP and the Philippine National Police to withdraw their support from Estrada.

In a separate interview, acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he had not been officially informed of any decision by President Macapagal-Arroyo to honor Estrada's extension of Reyes' term.

"President Macapagal can always have her decision," Ermita said. "It's her judgment."

Ms Macapagal had said a few days after assuming office that she was retaining Reyes but did not say whether she would honor the extension of his term.

### Unconstitutional

The General Provisions of the Constitution state that laws on retirement of military officers shall not allow extension of their service.

The charter also mandates that the tour of duty of the chief of staff shall not exceed three years. However, in times of war and other national emergencies, upon declaration of Congress, the President may extend the tour of duty.

"There is no war or national emergency. The extension was clearly unconstitutional," Abat said.

Reyes will reach the mandatory retirement age of 56 on March 17, 2001. He was appointed chief of staff on July 9, 1999.

Reyes' term was extended to July 9, 2002 by Estrada, ostensibly to allow him to complete a three-year tour of duty.

Official Camp Aguinaldo documents show Reyes' retirement papers were signed "By Order of the Secretary of National Defense" (Orlando Mercado) as early as Dec. 11, 2000.

Labeled as General Orders No. 1238, the retirement order stated that Reyes would complete 38 years of service on March 16, 2001.

According, to another interpretation of the Constitution, the President can extend the tour of the chief of staff beyond the mandatory retirement age to allow the incumbent to complete a three-year term.

Abat, however, said that the Constitution only stated that the chief of staff's tour should not exceed three years.

Abat said he was sure that members of the inner circle of President Macapagal were aware of the unconstitutionality of the extension of Reyes' term.

"It can always be revoked by President Macapagal. They know about it," Abat said.

### Emerging contenders

Espinosa, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1967, is the most senior officer next to Reyes, who is a member of PMA Class 1966.

According to reports, he was the AFP officer who took charge of providing security to Ilocos Sur. Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, whose "jueteng" exposé started the train of events which led to the downfall of Estrada.

Espinosa also closely collaborated with Abat and other retired and active officers in organizing the AFP's withdrawal of support for Estrada. He earlier claimed that Reyes, along with former defense secretary Mercado and other top brass, defected only at the last minute, after realizing that they no longer had the support of the troops.

Abat earlier revealed that had Reyes failed to defect on Jan. 19, certain units in the AFP led by Espinosa would have independently withdrawn their support from Estrada on Jan. 20.

Espinosa, who was yanked out of the Southern Command in February 2000 for still unclear reasons, is commandant of the Joint Command and Staff College, a post which should be occupied by a one-star officer or brigadier general.

Another contender to the post of chief of staff is Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, who belongs to PMA Class 1968.

However, Calimlim's loyalty to Ms Macapagal is highly suspect. He was the last of the AFP leadership to go to the Edsa Shrine, arriving there after having spent time at Malacañang with Estrada.

Other contenders include Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos (PMA Class 1969); Army commander Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva (PMA Class 1968); Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor Jr. (PMA Class 1969); Navy flag-officer-in-command Rear Admiral Guillermo Wong (PMA Class 1969); and Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling (PMA Class 1969).

Abat said that the President could opt for "deep selection," picking the new AFP chief from among the single or two-star generals.

Abat has been named by Ms Macapagal as president and chief executive officer of the Camp John Hay-Poro Point Development Corp.

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# ‘Just political posturing’

By Armand N. Nocum

MALACANAÑG yesterday brushed aside the announcement of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. that he planned to block the confirmation of Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, saying it considered opposition to the President's appointments normal in politics.

"It is always like that. This is nothing new. Every new government that appoints new Cabinet officials, there are always opposition," Palace Spokesperson Renato Corona said.

Pimentel, ex-officio chair of the bicameral Commission on Appointments, had said President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointees with pending cases should not expect to pass through the CA wringer.

He singled out Gordon who, he said, had "many pending cases with the Ombudsman."

But Corona replied that Gordon's cases were not serious enough to prevent him from being confirmed by Congress.

He said the CA could not block Gordon's appointment because he was the "President's choice," and "unless there's anything seriously wrong or he's not qualified," then Gordon could take his post.

"This is just political posturing, which is good because there are 'fiscalizers'," he said. "That is what is good in Philippine politics."

Asked what the Palace would do if the CA blocked Gordon's appointment, Corona said it was natural for Malacañang to reappoint some Cabinet members even up to four times.

"But some do not really get confirmed, but these are exceptional (cases)... once in a blue moon," he admitted.

Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco also gave assurance that the President's search and screening committee had gone over the backgrounds of the prospective Cabinet members carefully before endorsing them for appointment.

# Tanjuatco endorsed as Comelec chief

SOME 150 civic organizations headed by the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections have formally endorsed the appointment of Emigdio Tanjuatco Jr., a former congressman, as chair of the Commission on Elections, according to Namfrel.

The groups have also nominated lawyers Resurreccion Borra and Jose Luis Martin "Chito" Gascon as commissioners of Comelec, Namfrel national co-chairs Jose Concepcion Jr. Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez announced in a press statement yesterday.

They said the endorsement had come from church organizations, business groups, labor unions, student movements, and other civic organizations totaling over 150.

Tanjuatco, had chaired the suffrage and electoral reforms committee when he was a member of the House.

"The challenge ... in the elections after Edsa 2 is to elect a new Congress and new local government officials certified in clean, and honest elections," the endorsement letter said.

The credibility of the May elections would rest on "a credible Comelec," it said.

In nominating Tanjuatco, Borra and Gascon, it said the country needed "persons of integrity, leadership and commitment to deliver what clean and honest elections promise."

Leading the signatories were Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, Bishop Ramon Villena, Bishop Efraim Tendero of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, and the presidents of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Makati Business Club, Management Association of the Philippines and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines.

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# 20 Japanese cyclists to trace death march

**By Tonette Orejas**
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ANGELES CITY—Around 20 Japanese will cycle around Central Luzon for peace, human rights and nuclear disarmament beginning Feb. 16, the start of the five-day Peace Cycle 2001.

Peace Cycle 2001, a movement started and based in Japan, will trace the 200-kilometer Death March of World War II from Mariveles, Bataan to Capas, Tarlac, said Primo Amparo, spokesperson of Makabayan, a labor organization that is one of the cyclists' hosts this year.

In the Death March, some 30,000 Filipino and American soldiers who were captured on Bataan and Corregidor died when the Japanese army forced them to walk the entire way from Mariveles to Capas.

Postal employees from Osaka, Japan, began Peace Cycle in the early 1970s in Hiroshima during the World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs.

Every year between June and August, the cycle draws more than 1,000 persons who walk, bike and run for peace throughout the war and bomb-scarred cities of Okinawa, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, all in Japan.

Peace Cycle has also traveled to China, Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam.

This year's participants will meet victims and veterans of World War II, including former members of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon, the revolutionary guerrilla group.

In Candaba, Pampanga, they will meet with "comfort women," those who were turned into sex slaves by the Japanese Army.

While the Death March occurred 58 years ago, Amparo said Peace Cycle will also tackle contemporary issues that grew out of militarism, like the problems of displaced upland and tribal farmers and toxic waste victims.

"Peace Cycle 2001 is taking these issues as peace advocacy must go beyond campaigning for disarmament and prevention and cessation of hostilities. There is a need to understand and eliminate or counter the grounds for arms buildups, military treaties and actual interventions," Amparo said.

# Demonetize 1,000-peso bills, solon urges BSP

WHILE most people are wondering how the government could recover the large sums allegedly amassed illegally by former President Joseph Estrada, a congressman has come up with a novel suggestion.

"The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas should demonetize the P1,000 bank notes," according to Rep. Ace Barbers, chair of the House committee on economic affairs, who cited "intelligence" reports that the ousted president was hoarding the cash in a 36-sq. m. chamber dug up at his residence on Polk Street, Greenhills, San Juan.

"This has to be done," Barbers said, "in order to recover the money and at the same time put a closure to the Estrada presidency."

He said his idea was not at all far-fetched, considering that there are fewer P1,000 notes in circulation compared to the other denominations.

He said the owners of huge amounts of cash would have to properly identify themselves before their bills are replaced with new notes.

This would ferret out those suspected of fronting for Estrada when they attempt to exchange their old notes for new, he said.

Or the ex-president and his cohorts would end up with worthless "mickey mouse play money" if they insist on hanging on to their loot, Barbers added.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### 3 prosecutors defect

THREE congressmen who helped prosecute the impeachment case against deposed President Estrada have joined the Lakas-NUCD party, Rep. Ernesto Herrera (Lakas, Bohol) disclosed over the weekend. Herrera said Representatives Roan Libarios of Agusan del Norte, Salacnib Baterina of Ilocos Sur and Oscar Rodriguez of Pampanga earlier resigned from the pro-Estrada Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino. They were promptly sworn in as Lakas members by party secretary general Rep. Heherson Alvarez (Isabela). The three will be the official candidates of Lakas and the administration in their respective congressional districts in the forthcoming elections, according to Herrera.

### More borrowings ahead

THE GOVERNMENT will resort to domestic borrowing to finance a projected P150-billion budget deficit for this year, officials said yesterday. About 75 percent of the total, or P100 billion, will be "domestically sourced" while the rest would be financed through official development assistance, said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin. "But we are not yet sure as to the level of borrowings, whether bonds or private placements," Boncodin said. Boncodin ruled out new taxes as a means of generating income, but said revenue officials should intensify collection efforts. She said the P150-billion budget deficit is based on the P629-billion working budget the government has adopted this year. The P629 billion figure was government's budget last year, but would be carried over this year after Congress failed to pass a new general appropriations act before going into recess last week. AFP

### Villar to file candidacy

FORMER Speaker Manny Villar will file his certificate of candidacy for senator today at the Commission on Elections offices in Intramuros, Manila,. Villar held the speakership of the House of Representatives for more than two years. His candidacy has been endorsed by various civil society groups and religious organizations. He was elected congressman in 1992, 1995 and 1998. It was on this third and final term when he was overwhelmingly elected speaker by his colleagues. Last November, Villar, in his last official act as speaker fast-tracked the passage of the articles of impeachment against the President from the House to the Senate. The move cost him the speakership but triggered a series of events that led to a change in the national leadership.

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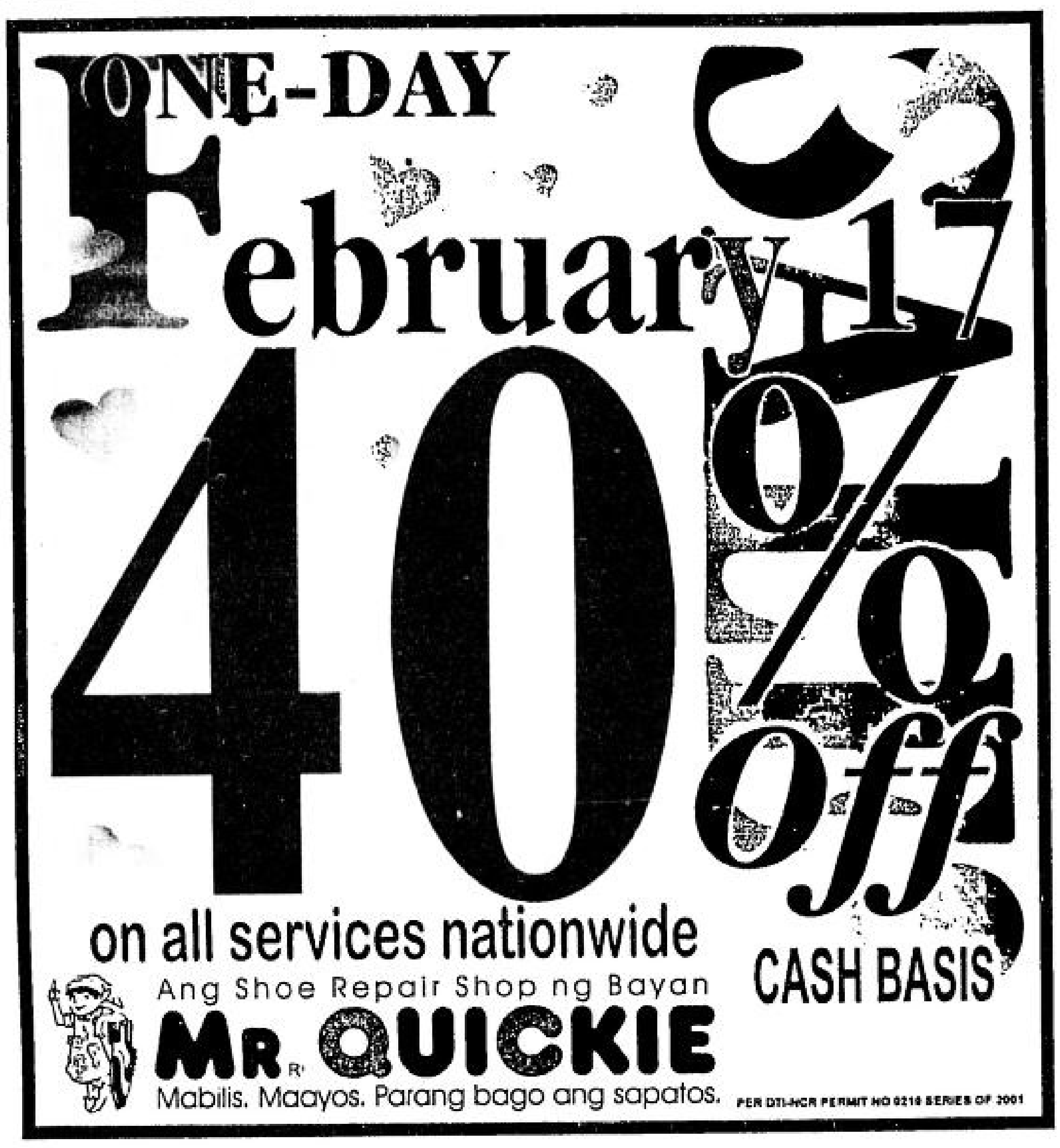
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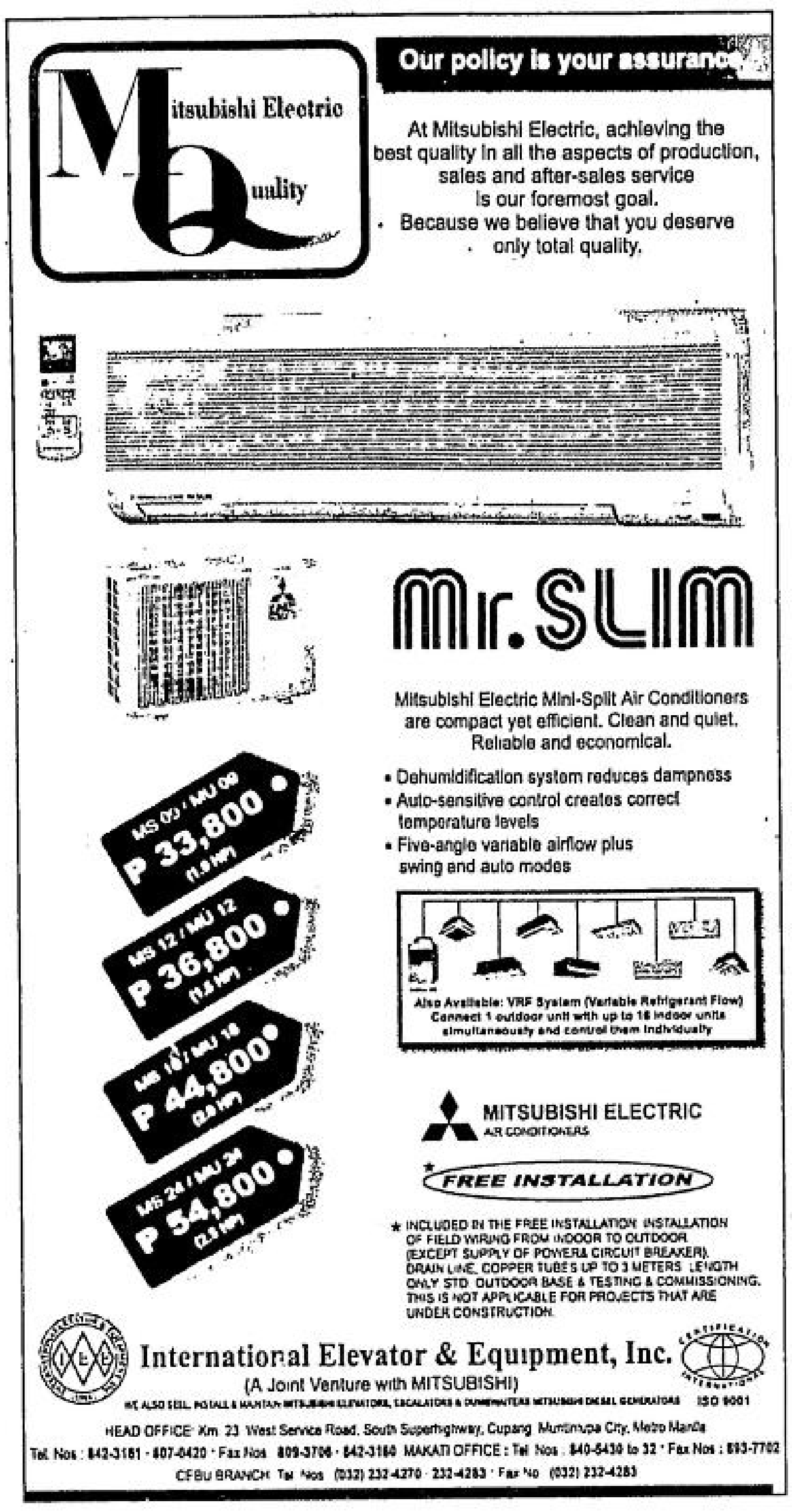
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# Erap: 'We have a banana republic'

HONG KONG—In an exclusive article for Time Asia this week, former President Joseph Estrada writes that he "was, and today remains, the duly elected President. What was inaugurated last Jan. 20 was a banana republic and time will vindicate me," Estrada writes in Time.

Estrada also vows that he wants his day in court and—even if he wins—he will formally surrender the presidency to Arroyo "if personal sacrifice is called for."

The article can be found in Time's Feb. 19 issue which reaches readers across Asia starting today, Feb. 12. An expanded version can be found online on www.timeasia.com.

"I swear on my father's grave that never in my entire career in public life have I taken a single centavo of taxpayer's money," Estrada writes, and he defends himself on the issue of his supposed P500-million trust account. "There was absolutely no government money, no jueteng money, and no dirty money involved."

Estrada writes about the alleged two-paragraph letter supposedly faxed to the Supreme Court on Jan. 20 where Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency because of his "permanent disability"—"permanent disability is not for Ms. Arroyo to determine. Her doctorate is in economics." And although Arroyo rejected Estrada's request for a snap poll as "unconstitutional," she herself violated the Constitution by the manner she took this oath, writes Estrada. "She invokes the charter when it is in her favor, but treats it as a minor inconvenience when it gets in the way."

People Power 2 (or Edsa 2) has set a very dangerous precedent in the Philippines, says Estrada, and now "the process of changing duly elected leaders may depend on the mob. Kidnappings and killings are back, local and foreign investors are staying in the wings uncertain as to when they will put their money in again. For what guarantees that there will be no Edsa 3, Edsa 4, Edsa 5?"

In his article Estrada also slams the Philippines Supreme Court. "It should not have entered the political thicket. It should confine itself to being an arbiter of controversies, instead of helping start or being in the center of one. Ultimately, he writes, "the victim of all these wanton transgressions is... the Filipinos, who depend on the Constitution for the protection of their rights."

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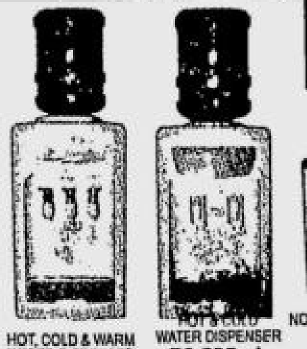

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# GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

## PART VII: COOPERATION IN THE SPIRIT OF EDSA II

### by Raul T. Concepcion

Industrialist

After EDSA II, we now have a new government committed to transparency, accountability and Good Governance.

In this light, more than 300 large companies have vowed not to lay off about 150,000 workers during the first quarter.

At the same time, the oil companies have pledged not to increase their prices for the month of February.

It is time, thus, to once more focus on the one important task during this new millennium, that of **making the Philippines globally competitive.** EDSA II taught us the most important element of being globally competitive: **GOOD GOVERNANCE.** Its absence almost wrecked the economy.

From this perspective, therefore, may I ask my fellow businessmen and industrialists to consider the following:

-- For us to conduct our business in the spirit of good corporate governance, in the same way we ask Government to commit itself to Transparency and a Level Playing Field.

-- That Industry, Agriculture, the Labor Sector, and Government join hands in helping each other become globally competitive. The challenge of becoming globally competitive is daunting. None of us, individually, can meet it, without the help of the other sectors. There are **thorny issues** to be addressed, namely:

1. Companies have to rationalize, downsize, outsource, and reengineer their operations. Globalization means global purchasing, global technology, global economies of scale.
2. Providing safety nets for those affected or displaced by globalization. Displaced workers must be trained with new skills required in e-commerce and information technology.
3. Deserving upstream industries must be made competitive without the need for a higher tariff protection that penalizes and renders uncompetitive the greater number of downstream industries.
4. Removing distortions created by Executive Order 334, where tariff rates for various raw materials are higher than those for semi-finished and finished products.
5. Having competitive infrastructure such as power, transport, shipping, telecommunications and a more efficient government bureaucracy. Our neighbors in Asia have achieved quantum leaps in economic growth because of excellence and reasonable cost in these areas.

We have the track record. We have known excellence. We have tasted prosperity before. Thirty years ago, we were the most progressive country in Asia, after Japan. There is no reason why we cannot do it -- again. For the sake of our people, our country, our future.

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# Probe money laundering, solon asks Buenaventura

**By Martin P. Marfil**

BANGKO Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura should investigate the anomalies uncovered by the House prosecution panel in its probe of alleged money-laundering activities of former President Joseph Estrada.

In addition, according to Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera, Buenaventura himself should be investigated by the 12th, or next, Congress when it opens.

"He (Buenaventura) should conduct an investigation and we would determine if his probe is credible. The central bank's concern should be the integrity of the banking system," said Herrera in his weekly radio program yesterday.

Buenaventura has been under pressure to resign since Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno produced documents showing that Estrada was able to withdraw more than P143 million from his account at Urban Bank the day before the bank was forced to close.

Other documents showed the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' provident fund was able to withdraw P15 million that same afternoon.

In addition, the deposed president is suspected of laundering ill-gotten wealth through the banking system using aliases and numbered accounts, as well as having deposits held in the names of other persons.

Moreno and other congressmen have called for Buenaventura's resignation and yesterday Herrera reiterated that the banking official should resign "out of *delicadeza*" (propriety).

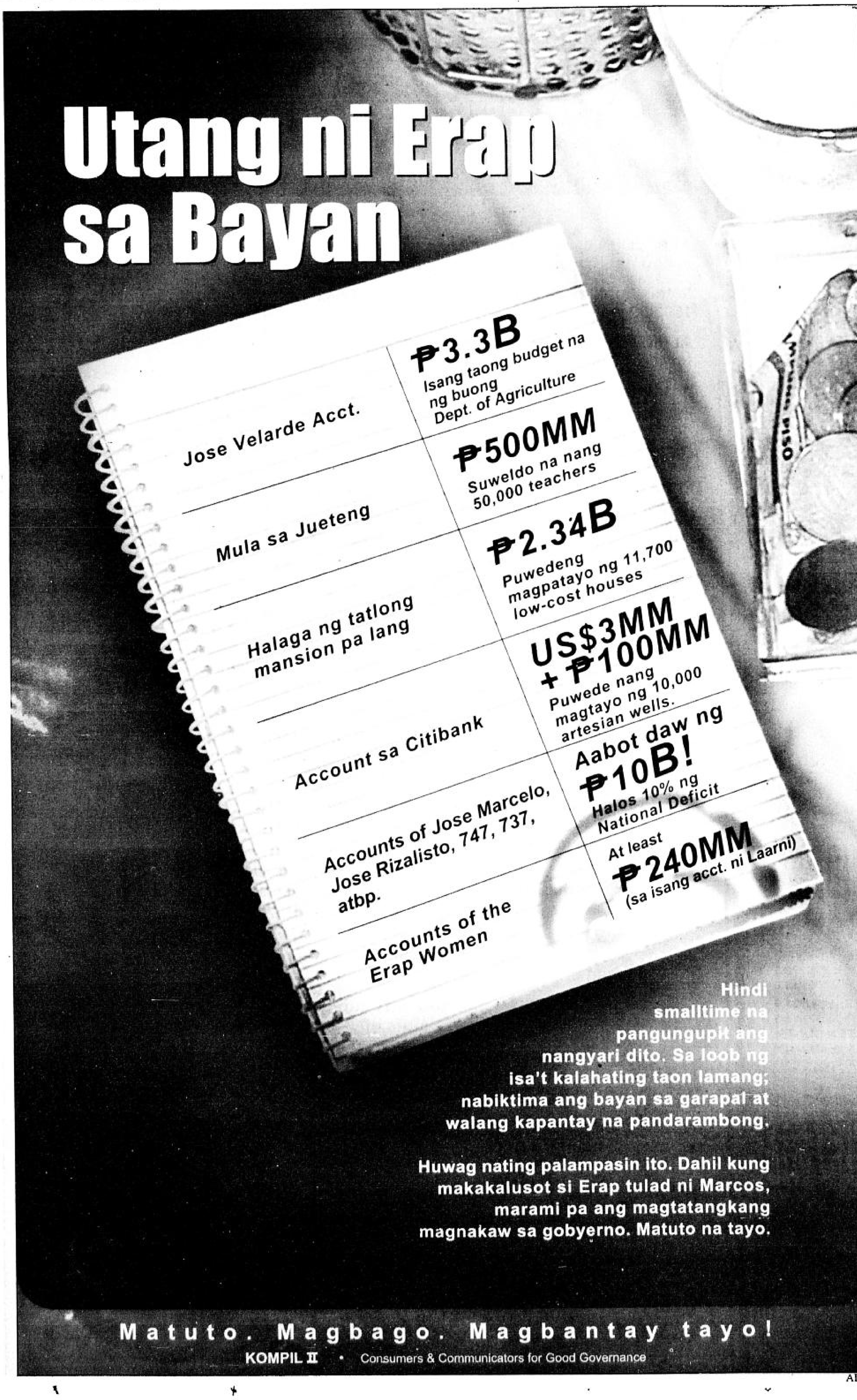
Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, who called up Herrera's program from Antique, said what bothered him was that the BSP protected Estrada and its own employees but did nothing for other depositors.

"Having a fixed tenure is not the issue. The issue is he (Buenaventura) said he didn't know anything about it, but Moreno had documents showing that BSP employees withdrew their money that same afternoon. The issue is that the small depositors had their monies stranded," he said.

"The question is did he tip off Erap and the BSP employees?" Arroyo said in Filipino.

Buenaventura has ignored calls for his resignation, saying he has a fixed six-year term from the date of his appointment by Estrada in July 1999.

Malacañang the other day backed him, saying that charges should first be filed against Buenaventura before any action could be taken against him.



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# Dichaves letter in 2nd envelope, says Belmonte

**By Martin P. Marfil**

THE CONTROVERSIAL second sealed envelope, which is to be opened on Wednesday, Valentine's Day, contains a letter to the old Equitable Bank from Chinese-Filipino businessman Jaime Dichaves expressing his intention to open an account in the name of Jose Velarde.

This was revealed yesterday by Speaker Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte who was the manager of the House prosecution team in the aborted impeachment trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

The Dichaves letter was one of several documents in the second envelope that contains the bank statements of the account belonging to Jose Velarde, the alias used by Estrada to allegedly launder ill-gotten money.

Belmonte said the team had initially opposed the opening of the second envelope because its contents were "subject to many interpretations."

But after the testimony of Equitable PCIBank senior vice president Clarissa Ocampo, it did not matter anymore whether the batch of documents involving Dichaves came out or not, Belmonte told reporters late Friday.

## Just the messenger

"Because at that point, it was very clear that Dichaves was either an agent of Jose Velarde or just a messenger of Jose Velarde," the Quezon City congressman said.

It was clear Dichaves was merely a messenger as all the withdrawals from the Jose Velarde account were "pre-signed," that is, Dichaves never signed the withdrawal forms and merely used pre-signed documents.

"He never, never signed the name of Jose Velarde. He never did because he wasn't really Jose Velarde, he was just the messenger," Belmonte said.

Belmonte placed the amount of money laundered in the account at more than P2 billion, less than the prosecutors' initial estimate of P3.3 billion.

The Speaker also revealed that the team was "disheartened" when they learned days before the fateful Jan. 16 hearing that the pro-Estrada senators had already gathered the numbers to stop the opening of the second envelope.

"We were disheartened by it because we did not know why they were stopping it. It wasn't that explosive. We needed (more) time to trace the lists that were contained in that bank account," he said.

At the time, the team was still tying to get bank documents on other Estrada cronies like Mark Jimenez and Lucio Co and the Senate was sitting on its requests for subpoenas.

## Real intention

The intention was not really to stop the opening of the second envelope, said Belmonte.

"The real intention was to (void) the subpoenas where the names of the Chinese cronies would come out. And the other intention was to exclude the testimony of Clarissa (Ocampo) which was dependent on (the prosecutors') being able to prove that the P500 million was ill-gotten," he said.

The prosecution panel, he said, would have been able to prove that the P500 million came from a savings account that had been in existence before Dec. 31, 1999, clearly covered by Estrada's Statement of Assets and Liabilities where he is supposed to have stated that he had only P35 million.

Belmonte said that the first and second envelopes had been obtained by the impeachment court using a subpoena that had "catch-all phrases."

It was issued before the impeachment court tightened its rules on subpoenas. The court was to later require two things: all documents must be cited with particularity and that the defense be given three days' notice.

This hampered the prosecution, said Belmonte.

According to Belmonte, the Clarissa Ocampo testimony came about when she was told by her superiors at the bank that the documents would name Dichaves as the "owner" of the Jose Velarde account as he was actually the "co-owner."

"There was only one thing wrong with that... they wanted to antedate (the documents) to Feb. 5, 2000. Certainly, it (the account) could be transferred to anybody but it has to reflect the real date of that transfer," Belmonte said.

"That is why Clarissa got very suspicious. Why was it being antedated to the same date as the Jose Velarde documents? That was where they committed a mistake," Belmonte said.

## Initial misgivings

The Speaker said the prosecutors were at first suspicious of the offer of Ocampo's testimony as they felt it could be part of a cover-up as it came after the opening of the first envelope that they felt contained forgeries.

But Equitable PCIBank was already panicky at that point because prosecutors Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno and lawyer Romeo Capulong were publicly castigating the bank and accusing it of a cover-up.

In fact, the bank had already suffered a "mild" bank run because many depositors were outraged by the contents of the first envelope.

Belmonte also revealed that the prosecution team never dealt with Mark Jimenez whom he described as "too smart" and did not at first think of calling former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu as a witness.

Espiritu was only approached so the team could get copies of the "jueteng" checks that were supposedly deposited with the United Overseas Bank, or the former Westmont Bank, which Espiritu used to own.

They only thought of Espiritu as a witness when some of their witnesses went "missing" in the middle of the trial without them knowing if they would be back or not, Belmonte said.

Former SEC commissioner Perfecto Yasay went to the United States.

The team also could not be sure that businessman Jose Luis "Sel" Yulo, who allegedly paid for the Boracay mansion, would testify.

Yulo's testimony apparently would only go as far as saying that he handed the documents pertaining to the "Boracay" mansion to Dichaves.

"When asked by the NBI who really owned the mansion, Yulo said whoever Dichaves gave those stocks to is the owner... He never once mentioned Erap," Belmonte said.

Belmonte said that when they talked to Espiritu about these, Espiritu told them he could corroborate some of the testimony on the BW Resources case.

## Acting lessons

Before the trial began, Belmonte said that they received help from several quarters, including a movie director who was called in to teach prosecutors how to "emote" in front of cameras.

The director, Joey Javier Reyes, was replaced by Maria Montelibano who coached them for their opening statements.

"She was also the one who prepared the visuals like the power point presentation," he said.

Pangasinan Rep. Hernani Braganza and Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya manned the secretariat.

It was Braganza, the prosecution panel's 12th member, who early on saw the logistical support and staffing problems.

"He (Braganza) immediately had stationery printed and he was the first appointee. Then came (Andaya) who handled the money because no one wanted to touch the money," he said.

Belmonte said that the House-allotted budget of P5 million was beefed up by "thousands of pesos" from the public.

## NBI urged to probe 'Rosebud' raps

REP. Ernesto Herrera yesterday urged the NBI and the immigration bureau to investigate allegations linking the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force to the disappearance of at least 21 Chinese nationals in the country.

Herrera was referring to the claim of Mary "Rosebud" Ong, a former anti-narcotics PAOCTF agent, that former PNP chief Panfilo Lacson's men were behind the kidnapping and "salvaging" of the Chinese nationals.

"Ong's allegations seem very grave, and should not just be swept under the carpet by the NBI," Herrera said.

"We also want the immigration bureau involved because it is in a position to validate the claim that the alleged victims arrived but never left the country and are now missing," Herrera said.

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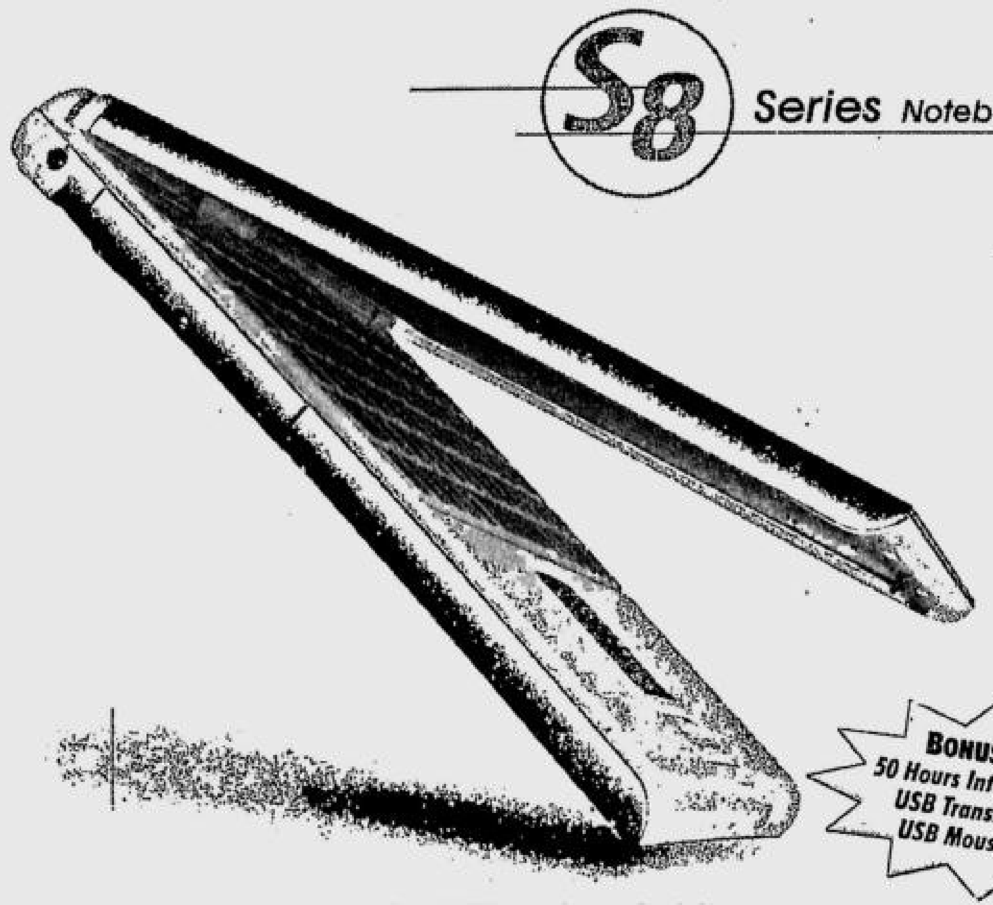

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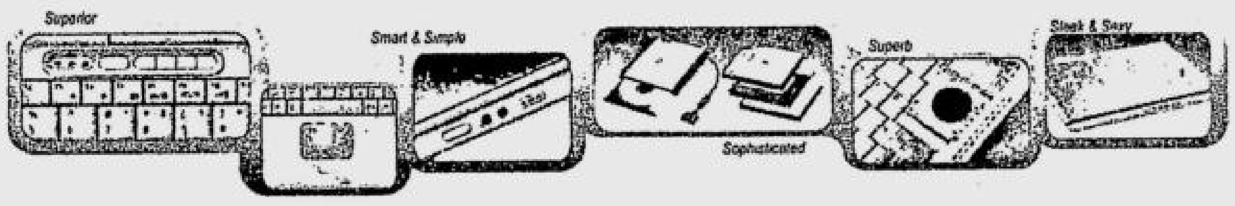

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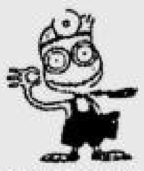

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Foremost among the principles he stood by was his desire for exemplary public service by elected members of Congress and Executive Branch, exemplified by his distaste for excessive congressional allowances then known as pork barrel.

So strong was his conviction, his fight against this evil caused him a spot on any party slate for his reelection. He then announced on August 13, 1967 that he would seek the people's mandate as an independent candidate, a move that was until then considered as political suicide.

On November 13, 1967 he was killed in a helicopter crash in Dolores, Quezon, one day before elections.

The Filipino people re-elected him, posthumously so to speak, by giving his widow a very convincing win.

My late father stood for everything that was good, right and proper when it came to governace. Friends or partymates would never be defended for their misdeeds, even a sitting President.

It is indeed difficult to oppose a sitting President. But if it is clear that a President has been doing wrong, one should never be blind, deaf and dumb, even he is a friend or partymate. Even if the heavens fall.

As the eldest son, **I pledge to continue my father's legacy.** And I will ensure that my children and my children's children will.

**Even if others cannot. Even if others will not.**

**Happy Birthday, Daddy. I love you.**

**ARTHUR W. ANTONIO**

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# OPINION

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# GMA's dilemma

EDITORIAL

IT was startling to learn from Joseph Estrada himself that he planned to leave for the United States to undergo eye surgery but was afraid, he said, that he wouldn't be allowed back into the country. Doesn't that sound like it was already a done deal? Rather out of character for Estrada, who after his downfall said again and again like a taunting mantra that he was never ever going to leave the country and intended to die here.

All of a sudden, he intends to go, perhaps never to return. Someone had convinced (coerced?) him. Or, as certain sources from the inner circle of the Macapagal administration intimated to the INQUIRER, a deal had to be struck with Estrada. For him to stay around to bedevil the new administration as he never signed a resignation letter could create a "constitutional crisis" or an embarrassment for the Macapagal administration in the event that Estrada's candidates were to win a significant number of seats in both houses of Congress in the elections in May.

To heighten the perception of his imminent departure, there was in the past week a procession of journalists, local and foreign, invited to interview the former president in the luxurious vastness of his residence in Greenhills.

The day after the interview with the INQUIRER when Estrada confirmed his plans to leave for eye surgery in the United States, there was an outcry against his trip which was generally seen by a multitude of critics as an escape from prosecution. But there was, too, Sen. Franklin Drilon saying that with "iron-clad guarantees" for his return, Estrada should be allowed to leave "for humanitarian reasons."

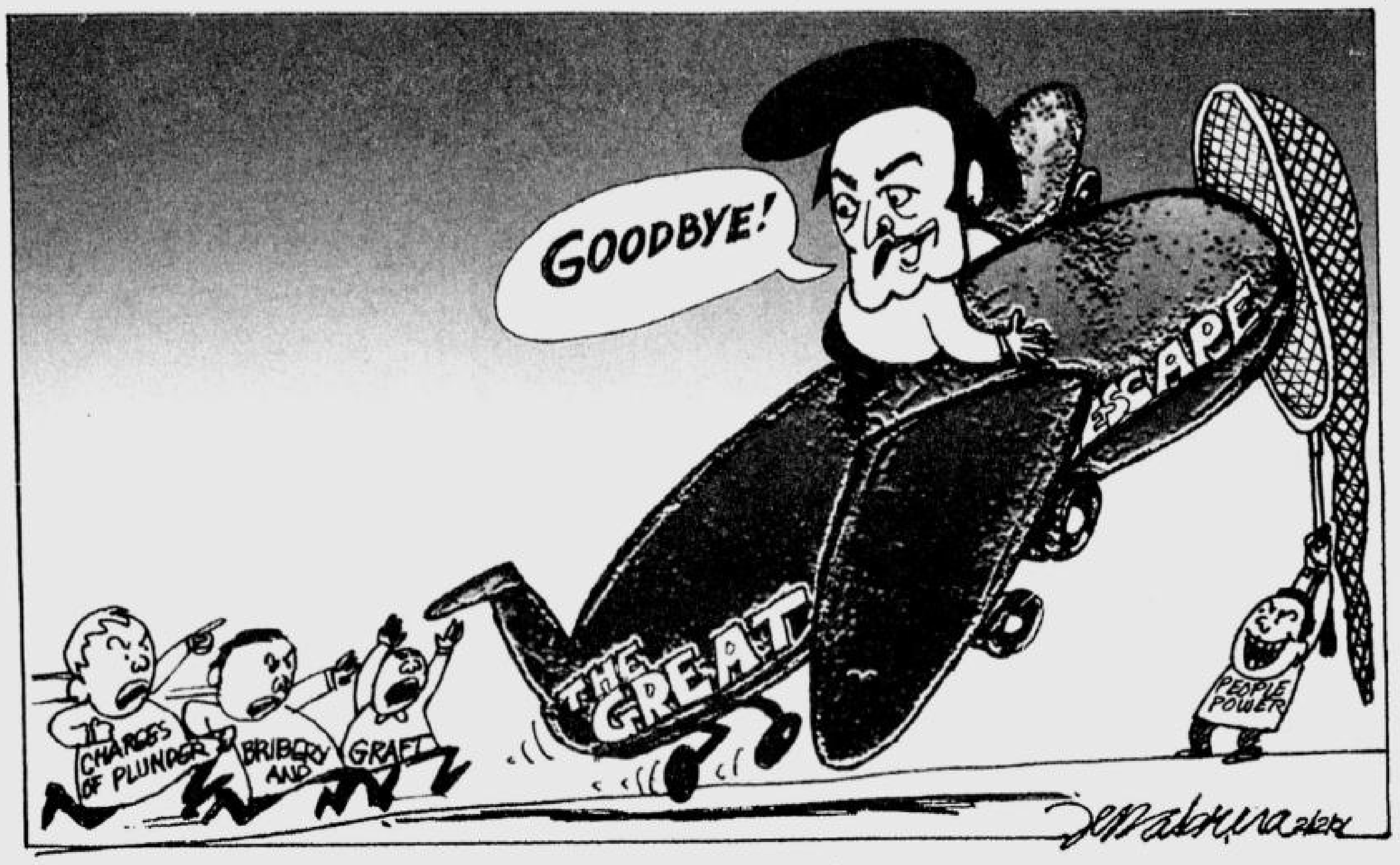
Already, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, who had issued hold departure orders for Estrada and 23 others including his wife, Dr. Loi Ejercito, was passing the buck to the courts. "The court can ask us to allow him to leave," he said.

More puzzling was the Palace reaction through the presidential spokesperson who could only say, "Maybe, we should not let him leave." Maybe? What happened to the priority of the Macapagal administration to pursue corruption charges against Estrada? What happened to political will, the covenant against corruption, Ms Macapagal's promise to the forces at Edsa that propelled her to the presidency that justice at last was going to be served?

The President herself had been unequivocal about the prosecution of the former president. Yet, barely a week in power on Jan. 28, she was already saying that exile was all up to Estrada. If that was a float to gauge public opinion, President Macapagal got it in full measure. She heard from the militant, civil society and religious sectors and the other constituencies of the People Power phenomenon. She heard from the congressmen and senators. She heard from the man on the streets. She heard from the media. All of it negative. Their cry was for justice to be done. There is enough evidence to arrest Estrada, they said, to prosecute, convict and send him to jail.

Estrada's confirmation of his travel plans could be another news float. That, too, drew a lot of heat. The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan warned the Macapagal administration of nationwide mass protests should Estrada somehow slip out of the country. Other militant groups have made it clear that President Macapagal is accountable to the people for Estrada's "escape" if that should come to pass.

Of course, we can't blame President Macapagal if she would rather have the deposed president get out of the country. Estrada's oft-repeated claim to the presidency is certainly not conducive to the pursuit by her administration for constitutional legitimacy and political stability. Legitimacy and stability are basic to the structure of a solid foundation from where the Macapagal administration can then proceed to focus its efforts on the country's myriad problems, each one as urgent as the next. With Estrada around, his rantings and ravings about being the president are distracting from the good intentions of the Macapagal administration. At their worst, they can be destructive given Estrada's still considerable and fanatical following. Also, with the May election, which is being viewed as a referendum on the Macapagal ascendancy, the new administration is wisely advised not to have Estrada around to campaign for his candidates. Already, the latest survey by the Social Weather Stations show that some of the Estrada-identified candidates are among the top 13 vying for Senate seats. Clearly, Ms Macapagal is lodged between a rock and a hard place.



# Slam-bang mayoralty fights in QC and Manila

AS I SEE IT

*Neal H. Cruz*

ERAP does not have to go to the United States for eye surgery. We have very good eye doctors here who can do all sorts of eye surgeries. Medical City has a very good Eye Center which can compare with the best in the world. In many cases, what a patient gets by going to the United States for medical treatment is only a bigger bill.

Erap must be misinformed or just wants to be allowed to leave the country allegedly for surgical treatment of glaucoma. *Luma na 'yan. Kumita na 'yan.* Erap is just doing an Imelda.

Erap allegedly expressed fears he may not be allowed to return if he is allowed to leave. More likely, he may not return at all, voluntarily, so he can escape the serious criminal charges facing him here.

But the surgery has long been scheduled for March, according to JV Ejercito, Erap's son by Guia Gomez. *Luma na rin 'yan.* Even if it has been scheduled, it is not written in stone.

Erap's statement is a trial balloon. He said he has yet to decide if he would seek the government's permission. He would seek it if the government shows a lenient attitude. He won't if it indicates it can't be fooled into giving him permission.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo shouldn't allow herself to be fooled. If she unwittingly allows Erap to escape, her administration would be destabilized by more mass protests. It can even lead to People Power III.

* * *

**The mayoralty races in Quezon City and Manila will be interesting this May. There will be four-cornered fights for the mayor's seat in both of these cities.**

**In Quezon City, Mayor Ismael Mathay Jr. can no longer run for reelection. He will run as representative in Congress of the fourth district, the post now occupied by Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, who is also graduating and running, in return, for Mathay's mayoralty seat. But another Ismael Mathay will run for mayor—"Chuck" Mathay whose full name is Ismael Mathay III. Asked at a recent dinner if he would definitely run, he replied, mimicking Bro. Mike Velarde: "Chuck *'yon!*"**

**Besides Belmonte, the younger Mathay will face actor Rudy Fernandez and Rep. Dante Liban.**

**But the showdown will really be between Mathay and Belmonte. Liban is unbeatable in his district of Novaliches but the Mathay political machine will swamp him in the three other districts. Fernandez has little political organization to speak of and relies only on his popularity as an actor. Moreover, he was banking on the financial support of friend and fellow actor Jinggoy Estrada. But with Jinggoy's father already an ex-president and facing enormous legal fees, that source of campaign funds is out. And in the popularity contest, Fernandez faces Chuck's acknowledged daughter, sexy star Ara Mina, who will campaign with fellow actresses for her father. Besides, Chuck's running mate is another actress, incumbent Vice Mayor Connie Angeles. Will Fernandez's ever-loving but aging Lorna T. be a match for them?**

**Belmonte also has a strong organization—but only in his district. (This means the older Mathay will have a tough fight in his hands.) He has none in the other districts where Mathay the father has nurtured his own these many years. But Belmonte's being Speaker of the House—even if only briefly—and his role as manager of the House prosecution panel in the impeachment trial are a big advantage. As any damn fool can see, the administration ticket is unfairly and unjustifiably riding on People Power II to get votes by using "People Power Coalition" and "Edsa Forces" as names for their coalition. This is foul and should not be allowed by the Commission on Elections. The names belong to the people and not to any political party. *Trapos* should not be allowed to soil it.**

**But Chuck is a relative newcomer in politics, you say. Not really. He is a Quezon City councilor and ran against Liban for congressman but lost. And he has been busy visiting barangays and shaking hands with voters. Besides, many voters would think they are for the older Mathay, whose political machinery and ward leaders that had put him in City Hall for three terms, had long been working for the younger Mathay. And he must have learned many political tricks from his father. Furthermore, he is the only candidate who has a comprehensive master plan for Quezon City.**

* * *

In Manila, Mayor Lito Atienza will face his former partner, ex-Mayor Alfredo Lim. Former Rep. Amado Bagatsing and oh no! Imelda Marcos.

The last we can dismiss as comedy relief but the others are a serious threat. Lim is the more serious. His all-consuming desire is to kick his former vice mayor out of City Hall. Despite topping several surveys for the Senate, he spurned a senatorial candidacy to run for mayor. He hates Atienza more than he loves the Senate. But as a close associate of Erap who cleared his boss in his assigned investigation of the Erap mansions, Lim has been injured by People Power II.

A beneficiary of People Power is Bagatsing who is already a loser in Manila's mayoralty fights. He plans to win this time with the help of the administration and People Power.

But Atienza is no pushover. He has apparently performed well during his term and there are no serious complaints against him. He has not been involved in any scandal, as far as I know. Moreover, he has strengthened his political organization and even took over, some claim, the leaders of Lim.

Former Mayor Mel Lopez, who also lost to Lim, has been emboldened by the second coming of Lakas, his party, and wants a return bout with Lim and Atienza. But the party anointed Bagatsing instead of him as its official candidate. So Lopez is thinking of running for congressman in his own district while his incumbent congressman-brother runs for reelection in another district.

# Dear Vice President

THERE'S THE RUB

*Conrado de Quiros*

I THOUGHT I'd congratulate you last Saturday night. I got your invitation to your victory party on my e-mail. I had just come from Baguio, where I had been since last Monday for some workshops, and after a couple of hours' sleep, went straightaway to the Fort.

I do think you've richly earned the position. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was at least right about one thing (I heard her announcement on AM, though the reception in Baguio was poor, my radio crackling with static): All the candidates for vice president, Franklin Drilon and Raul Roco, Loren Legarda and Jun Magsaysay, and the various NGO personalities, were completely meritorious. In fact, Gloria's quandary struck me as a case of the lucky having to sit in judgment over the deserving. Anyone in that list easily contributed more to putting an end to a tyranny than she did. But Gloria is my President now, and to her I owe my loyalty as a citizen—which includes the duty to criticize. To you, however, as to anyone in that list, I owe more.

I do not agree that you are especially right for the job because you come from Mindanao. The notion that we need a Mindanaoan to improve Mindanao, or an Ilonggo to improve the Visayas, or a Bicolano to improve Southern Luzon, merely reinforces our tendency toward regionalism, a thing all of us would do well to transcend. I remember being dismayed a couple of years ago to hear Bicolanos saying that Bicolanos must vote for Roco because he is one of them. I should think there must be more reasons to vote for a candidate than that he comes from the same hometown. I myself feel no compelling need to vote for Gringo Honasan. I should think the same principle applies to putting people in key government positions.

I do think you deserve the job because you had the foresight to call for Erap's impeachment long before any other senator did. I called for it earlier, but I am not a senator, and I am given to hyperbole, though I was being perfectly literal at the time. Other senators then were calling for Erap to resign, hold "snap" elections, or see the light. It took vision, courage and, well, luck to say what you did. What we need in government today are not people with technocratic abilities but people with vision and courage. I will not dwell too much on the luck because Gloria is there.

It was with these thoughts in mind that I went to the Fort last Saturday night, braving traffic, tight shoes and a great lack of social skills. I took about an hour to get there and about 15 minutes to leave. I did not see anybody I knew, except Teddy Casiño and Carol Araullo. The Tent, a cavernous place as I saw for the first time that night, was filling up when I got there, which was toward the end of the Mass. People were getting off from cavernous cars, many of them Caucasians, many of them with glittering baubles, all of them with nice shoes.

Inside the hall, the priest was exhorting people to hold up their right hand and send a beam of light or energy in your direction. I did as bid, abandoning my agnosticism for a while—I did not even know this was Christian practice—and sincerely hoped the trick would work. A person beside me also had his right hand raised, with his left hand pressed on his ear, a metallic cellular phone no bigger than a mouse squeezed between those two bodily organs. I most sincerely hoped the omega waves from his phone did not interfere with the alpha waves we were sending in your direction.

Marveling at the horde of well-wishers, Teddy Casiño would tell me wryly how hard it used to be to gather a crowd like this: You would be lucky to get a tenth of them to attend rallies or forums. I smiled, and in my mind attributed it to human nature, though I knew I insulted the human species to do so. Well-heeled shoes are fragile shoes and break with the friction of asphalt. I knew as well that if I said this in public, the well-heeled were bound to complain that I do not have a window with which to look into other people's hearts and discern sincerity from venality. I did not particularly care.

I abandoned all thought of shaking your hand, reserving the privilege in this column. I said to myself a vice president had only two ears, and big as they were, they could only withstand so much praise, or importuning, in one night. I also worried that I looked more like a terrorist or a rock star—they are indistinguishable—than a journalist, and might invite undue attention from your security. I did think you deserved praise for your stand in the impeachment trial, I did think you deserved congratulations for your appointment to the vice presidency. But social graces have never been my strong suit, as my wife complains. I thought slinking away was the better part of enthusiasm, and slunk away.

From there I went straightaway to the UP Chapel to pay my last respects to Popoy Lagman, a man who might not have earned my affections but most certainly had done so my awe. There I met Popoy's mother, a woman of equally awe-inspiring courage and fortitude who, through her pain, could not but feel immensely proud of her children, two of whom had been felled by the hand of the enemy. It was still early in the night, but there was a crowd already forming there, students with their backpacks who streamed in and out of the chapel, workers in sandals and slippers who stared into the night, a gaggle of people who trooped to Popoy's coffin, some with tears in their eyes, and spoke in hushed whispers. I felt at home.

I don't know, Mr. Vice President, but I saw you in the Senate when you raised your voice—a stentorian one that I would not entirely credit to the Ateneo—in a plea for decency and a better government. I would like to hope you felt at home too with the crowd there when you visited, probably far more than you did with the throng that, rivaling Edsa, massed at your victory last Saturday night. I can only further hope that when the importuning comes—and I am sure it has begun—you would have the ears to hear out the pleas for decency and a good government coming from them. It would take very keen ears to do so, for the voices of these folk have a strange way of being drowned out by those of the few. Enough for someone to think they are actually mute. I do believe, or suspect, you have those ears, which is why I am sending this message to you and not to your senior—officially at least—partner.

I stayed at UP Chapel for a while and came home, hungry and tired. I went on to improve my health by devouring the vegetables I had brought home from Baguio. I could send you some, if you like,

# Why Erap may want to leave–and stay

POLITICAL TIDBITS

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

THIS afternoon at 5 o'clock, the funeral of slain leftist leader Popoy Lagman will be held at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina. Expected to join the 2-kilometer march from the UP Catholic Chapel to the memorial park are thousands of Ka Popoy's sympathizers, who are also scheduled to launch Ka Popoy's dream of a "Partido ng mga Manggagawa" right at the spot in UP Diliman where he was felled by two assassins' bullets.

Our sincere condolences to Ka Popoy's family, especially his elder brother, former Rep. Edcel Lagman, a volunteer private prosecutor in the impeachment trial. Edcel, profoundly affected by the murder of his kid brother, is now running for Congress in Quezon City's fourth district, while his daughter, Kristel Lagman, is seeking reelection in Camarines Sur. The other evening at the UP Chapel, Edcel told me how unhappy he was over the snail pace of the authorities' investigation into the death of his brother. Edcel's impatience is understandable—after all, it's not as if the investigators are facing a blank wall; there were four witnesses to the murder. Now I note that the PNP investigators are promising apprehension of the killers within one week. This is the first test case for the Macapagal administration in the apprehension of criminals.

* * *

**Brand new Vice President Tito Guingona, who's scheduled to take his oath as foreign secretary, may have a brand new controversy in the Department of Foreign Affairs if things are not handled right. Former Estrada Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero has been quoted telling people that he would be appointed consul general in San Francisco, to replace the ailing Amado Cortez, but I understand that the career DFA officers have vowed to protest it vigorously. Their contention is that except for the appointment of Cortez in the past regime, the consulates-general have rightfully been the exclusive domain of career officials, unlike the post of ambassador, where the DFA Career Service law allows a certain percentage of political appointments. I recall that the DFA personnel vigorously protested Cortez's appointment before the Commission on Appointments and I heard that they are set to do so again if Tuquero is named to the San Francisco post.**

* * *

Political realities are such that political accommodations have to be made with certain power blocs. Tuquero's reported accommodation would be an obvious concession to the Iglesia ni Cristo. But it would be better if President Macapagal were to give him an ambassadorial position, instead of sending him to the San Francisco consulate as this would demoralize the DFA personnel and officials. This would happen at a time when they are full of expectation that the new President would respect careerism, following the statement she made at the vin d'honneur she gave for the diplomatic corps right after her assumption to office that she would avoid the practice of using ambassadorships as "political concessions." Ms Macapagal had stressed that she would appoint non-career people only at that level and "on the basis of competence alone." The DFA people took this to mean she would take to heart RA 708, the Foreign Service Act, which her father, President Diosdado Macapagal, had authored in 1952, from which the career foreign service corps sprang.

At our media women's lunch with Executive Secretary Rene de Villa, this columnist brought this up and De Villa said that no appointment has yet been issued to Tuquero and that the President was made aware of the issue. This will be closely watched.

* * *

**Another sector up in arms is that of the party-list representatives in Congress, led by Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales. Under Article VI of the Constitution pertaining to the party-list representation in Congress, as fleshed out by the Party List Law of 1995, RA 7941, 80 percent of seats in the House is allocated to the district representatives and 20 percent to the party-list organizations who ought to truly represent the "marginalized" and "under-represented." These include the labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous communities, etc. The idea is to ensure that more legislation reflecting these marginalized sectors' interests could be enacted, and not just those of the landlord, business and other wealthier classes in the 80 percent.**

**The problem is that in the May 2001 elections, the party-list sector promises to swell from the 123 groups that participated in May 1998, to some 266 groups. They include even the major political parties which are already adequately represented in the 80 percent of the seats. In fact, there's talk that even Ernesto Maceda will run under the party-list system. More of this issue soon.**

* * *

Should former President Estrada be allowed to leave for eye surgery in the United States? Definitely, for humanitarian reasons he should be allowed to have his eye treatment, but this column opines that he should not be allowed to leave for the United States for this. There are excellent eye doctors here. Another option is to import his US doctors and have the surgery done here.

The popular and logical fear is that if the former President is allowed to leave, he might not return as he dreads being arrested for the plunder cases that have been filed before the Ombudsman. Those cases are pretty strong and justice department sources say that once prima facie evidence has been established, Estrada could be thrown in jail as early as two weeks from now.

* * *

**Whether Estrada would stay away for long is debatable, though. Those who know him well say he won't for two good reasons: his longtime mistress Guia Gomez is ill with multiple sclerosis and in fact, sources say Erap regularly stays with her in her San Juan residence in the evenings, to watch over her. Another reason is that his mother, Doña Mary Ejercito, whom he adores, is also not well.**

**Once there were three ladies in their 90s who were very close friends. One is Doña Mary Ejercito. Another is Manoling Morato's 91-year-old mother, Doña Consuelo Eclavea Lim de Morato, who is also not too well. Manoling, a very dutiful son, spends a lot of his time these days caring for her. The other old lady was Doña Ruperta Isay de Asis, the 92-year-old mother of famed antique dealer Viring de Asis, who, because of her big-heartedness, is a friend of everyone including Estrada and Imelda Marcos. Last week Ate Viring's mom passed away and among the wreaths that came for her was a huge one studded with white orchids, from "H.E. President & Mrs. Joseph Estrada."**

# Five years; three months

LETTER FROM MINDANAO

*Carolyn O. Arguillas*

EXACTLY five years ago today, an assassin entered the office of human rights lawyer and journalist Ferdinand Reyes in Dipolog City and gunned him down in front of his very young child.

Five days from now, it will have been three months since radio commentator Olympio Jalapit Jr. of Pagadian City was gunned down.

Jalapit, 34, was gunned down shortly after he left a PTA meeting and about an hour after he received a death threat sent as text message on his cell phone.

Reyes, then in his early 30s, and Jalapit, were killed in the morning by assassins who did not seem afraid witnesses could identify them.

Both cases have remained unsolved.

In both, influential people were the principal suspects. In both, the gunmen continue to roam freely, ready to pounce on their next "assignment" while the witnesses continue to be afraid.

Jalapit's wife, Gina, 32, a public school teacher, sent a letter to President Macapagal on Monday, seeking help in facilitating the investigation of her husband's murder.

Gina wrote that the local police and the National Bureau of Investigation had said they have identified the suspects but have not made moves to effect an arrest.

Paging NBI chief Reynaldo Wycoco and PNP chief Leandro Mendoza.

The Jalapits' youngest child, Olympio III, aged 2, continues to ask when his father is coming back. The gunman was reportedly paid P30,000 by influential people there to silence Jalapit forever. Ms Macapagal has yet to answer the letter of Jalapit's widow.

Reyes, as he predicted days before his death, became yet another entry in the statistics of unsolved cases.

* * *

THE VERDICT. My appointment book and calendars have this entry for today: "The Verdict!" Today would have been V-Day—the handing down of the verdict in the impeachment trial of Joseph Estrada.

But the verdict that removed him from the presidency was handed down much earlier, on Jan. 20, not by the Senate impeachment court but by the Court of the Filipino People.

It has been 23 days since the "eruption of hope" for "new beginnings."

Twenty-three days under a new administration that promised "new politics" but appears to be headed back to the detested *trapo* politics.

Twenty-four days since the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police withdrew support for Estrada.

And it seems like President Macapagal is so beholden to the military and the retired generals around her. She ought to be reminded that while the military's withdrawal of support for Estrada was crucial in the then President's ouster, that would not have happened if the people had not gathered at Edsa, Mendiola and other parts of the country.

What I and millions of Filipinos want to know is what really transpired during the meetings between Ms Macapagal and AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes and the other military and police officials (retired or incumbent) beyond the reported request of Reyes for a "dignified" exit for Estrada. What were the deals forged during those meetings?

* * *

NOT TOO LATE. This is late but better late than later. Special thanks to the stenographers and the Senate staff (and Supreme Court stenographers, too) who must have spent many a sleepless nights just to finish the transcript of stenographic notes (TSN) during the impeachment trial.

Special thanks, too, to the staff of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel for posting the TSN a day or two after each hearing, in www.nenepimentel.org.

* * *

COMBATTING CORRUPTION. How will President Macapagal combat corruption?

Six months ago today (Aug. 12), when no one imagined Estrada would be exposed by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and eventually ousted by people power, then Vice President Macapagal delivered a speech at the International Conference on "Institutionalizing Strategies to Combat Corruption: Lessons from East Asia" at the Mandarin Oriental.

Good governance, she said, rests on three pillars—"a sound moral foundation to guide our leadership at all levels...a philosophy of transparency in all government actions...an ethic of effective implementation throughout the bureaucracy. These are high standards to be held up to, but the people deserve no less."

For the most part of her speech, however, President Macapagal dwelt on how her father, Diosdado Macapagal, President of the Philippines (1961 to 1965), tried to combat corruption.

She spoke of her father's launching of a moral regeneration program "out of recognition that graft in government could not be crushed in a single stroke as a dragon could be killed with a swing of St. Michael's sword or be washed away like dirty stables with a herculean douse of water, but that like a foul, infected wound, it must be healed by patient, constant, steady disinfecting, scraping and cleansing."

Her father, she said, "believed that a primordial requirement in the drive against corruption in government was to set the example at the top."

"My father's Administrative Order No. 1 as President was to 'prohibit all officers and employees of the government holding positions of trust and responsibility from dealing directly or indirectly with my relatives or the relatives of Mrs. Macapagal, in matters relating to contracts where the government or any of its subdivisions, agencies or instrumentalities is a party, or to the procurement or purchase of property, supplies and materials or to appointments of government personnel.' In the proper enforcement of this order, my father published a list of his kin by blood and by affinity and those of my mother."

When is President Macapagal publishing a list of her relatives by blood and affinity?

And going by that example she is to give, shouldn't her Cabinet members and other officials, elected or appointed, also publish a list of their (and their husbands' or wives') relatives by blood and affinity?

# Our sacred cow is a golden calf

COMMENTARY

*Dean Jorge Bocobo*

JUETENGATE produced many memorable statements. One was attributed to Jaime Cardinal Sin during the blue ribbon committee hearings on the role of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) in setting up Bingo 2-balls. His eminence is supposed to have quoted St. John Bosco saying, "If Satan appears to me and gives me money, I will accept the money and spend it all for the poor." He was reacting to the revelation that the Church, religious charities and cultural organizations received P181 million in Pagcor gaming proceeds during the Erap presidency. I do not doubt his sincerity.

But maybe the devil is only too glad to oblige the good cardinal. The share given to virtuous charity is a pittance, compared to the vicious corruption that organized gambling wreaks on the nation's moral fiber. The odds for evil far exceeds the odds for good in gambling, and I bet the father of lies is an excellent statistician who appreciates the accidental role of cardinals and governments as public relations cover. The Church publicly bemoans our "culture of gambling," but seems to tolerate it by acquiescence and a little profit-sharing.

Besides, the devil has many other businesses. Would the Church be willing to accept monies from legalized prostitution or drugs? It is not inconceivable that the Philippines would one day have a Sexcor or a Drugcor. The government could use a share of the big money from these other rampant vices, given its uncontrollable budget deficits and matching insatiable appetite.

Virtually any justification for large-scale legalized gambling, could be applied to prostitution and drugs, if one trumpets the same good intentions. But just because these vices will always be engaged in by some people, is not enough reason to make them available to everyone. How can one militate against hedonistic lust and escapism, yet abide avarice and greed? Lady Chance is nothing but a respectable whore. Pagcor's casinos her coffin-white brothel, the government her winking pimp, the Church and charities her niggardly tipped janitors and unwitting justifiers. Poor people need charity, yes, but businesses and jobs would be far better than handouts and thinly veiled political bribery.

Pagcor has become a sacred cow in our society because it represents easy money for the government. Ever since it was created by the dictator Marcos, working with Stanley Ho back in the '70s, its contribution to government coffers has steadily grown. Last year this reached P20 billion. Every president has depended on it, like a drug addict. Now, the national government is the biggest gambling lord of all, the highest priest at Pagcor's temple to the golden calf.

Still, let us leave others to agonize over the moral casuistry that abets gambling. We can also tackle the problem from the vantage point of cold-blooded economics.

Gambling entails what economists call an opportunity cost. Our society pays dearly for the productive opportunities that are lost in gambling. How many businesses were never born because some would-be entrepreneur lost his seed money in Pagcor's playground of greed? How many factories have gone unbuilt, farms left fallow and infertile, millions unemployed? What dreams have been dashed and families destroyed? What grand possibilities have vanished in the slim probabilities of those games of chance? Visit any casino and witness the economy being embalmed at the green, felt-covered gaming tables. Listen to the tintinnabulation of the slot machines. That's the death knell of the country's future going down the drain.

The only form of casino gambling we should support is the kind that happens in the Philippine Stock Exchange, minus the manipulation of cheaters like Dante Tan and Erap Estrada. Instead of cards, let gamers play with bonds and securities; instead of craps, computers; instead of roulette, real estate; instead of black jack, biotechnology; instead of televised bingo, telecommunications. Playing the stock market can be just as much fun and taxable to boot. Perhaps the National Economic Development Authority ought to study this as an economic issue and decide if abolishing Pagcor could actually result in greater income for the government in the long run.

At the heart of this argument is our society's need for a reformed work ethic. As an old Smith-Barney motto goes, let's make money the old-fashioned way, let's earn it. If the new President is serious about leading by example, this is one area where the hard choice of doing the right thing can prove her leadership ability.

There are also important issues of governance involved. The new President has called for a new politics, supposedly eschewing the old politics of patronage. But the presidency itself is the main trunk of this rotten political system, supporting every "branch" of government from the national to the local levels. Is it any wonder that those limbs produce so many *balimbings* and *trapos*? The easy money of Pagcor is at the root of that rot because so much of its profits feeds Malacañang's discretionary funds.

Government's drug like addiction to gambling money will be hard to deal with. Pagcor's teats are sweet and convenient. Running casinos is really a no-brainer compared to collecting taxes and customs duties. Government needs Pagcor to fuel its profligate spending and the wasteful ways which only impoverish future generations even before they are born. Keeping the government dependent on gambling gives in to the same ethical torpidity that got Erap ousted. Our new economist President should work to abolish Pagcor, suppress organized gambling and lead the nation to true spiritual and material prosperity. Perhaps the Church will help her do this, if only to atone for the compromising position of organized religion in the moral and political havoc of organized avarice.

# Account of Erap's last days in Malacañang

READERS' ADVOCATE

*Raul J. Palabrica*

SOME readers have expressed doubts about the accuracy of former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara's account of the final days of ex-President Joseph Estrada in Malacañang.

It will be recalled that in its Feb. 4, 5 and 6 issues, the INQUIRER published Angara's recollection of the last two days of Estrada in office. The narration of events, which was exclusive to the newspaper, graced the front page on the three days mentioned.

The readers' comments on the Angara diary dwelt primarily on whether the account was credible or merely an effort to make himself look good in the public's eye.

Characteristic of the letters this column received was the one sent by Jay Bitas of Novaliches, Quezon City. He wrote: "Here are some of the questions that I would appreciate you answer before I make my personal analysis:

"1. Did Angara personally turn over his diary to your office?

"2. Did Angara sign or make any authentication that he was really the one who made the account?

"3. Did you ask Angara if he wrote the things in his diary on a daily basis, i.e, the information was written during the exact crucial days or the week after Estrada was booted out of Malacañang?

"4. Did you show him or furnish him a draft of the headlines before releasing the newspaper to the public? What proof can you show us, the readers, that there is no possibility that Angara will disclaim or deny what were printed as headlines?"

Before answering the questions raised by the reader, it would be advisable to give a backgrounder on how the Angara diary found its way in the INQUIRER.

Through its usual sources, the newspaper received information early last week that Angara had made a written account of the events that transpired on Jan. 19 and 20 at the country's seat of power.

## Trust and confidence

Since Angara played a significant role in the negotiations for Estrada's peaceful surrender of power to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the editor in chief felt it would be a good idea to have a copy of Angara's diary made available to the readers.

A "first person account" of the goings-on in Malacañang during the two crucial days that led to the ascension of Ms Macapagal into power would be a scoop, a feather in the cap of the newspaper.

So the appropriate representations were made with Angara for the INQUIRER to have the first crack on his narration of events, subject only to the condition that the account shall be published as written and that no changes shall be made except to conform with the newspaper's standard rules on style and grammar. He agreed to the request.

Let us now go to the questions of Bitas. The following answers were culled from discussions with the editorial personnel involved in the solicitation and publication of the diary.

Yes, Angara personally turned over a copy of his account to the newspaper. The editor in chief reviewed the material to determine whether to publish it in one issue or break it into parts. Considering its length, she decided to come out with it as a three-part series.

On the question of whether Angara signed or made any authentication of the veracity of his account, the answer is no. And neither did the INQUIRER ask or suggest to him that he make such certificate of authenticity.

Why? Because the discussions with Angara were made on the basis of trust and confidence. The newspaper took into consideration his track record of candor in dealing with the media during the more than two decades that he had been in the public service.

Trust is an important element in the highly competitive field of news reporting. The editor in chief has to make judgment calls on whether a piece of news should be published or not. In Angara's case, her sixth sense told her that his account of the Jan. 19 and Jan. 20 events in Malacañang deserves to be read by the public.

For the same reason mentioned above, the INQUIRER did not ask Angara if he wrote the entries in his diary on a daily basis or a week after Estrada gave up the presidency.

In the first place, the events involved happened only in two days, not over a period of weeks or months. There is reasonable basis to believe that Angara's recollection of the events was still fresh. He may not be exactly young in age, but there are no indications that he is suffering from memory lapses.

Besides, Angara is known in the business circle as a management person who dutifully kept records of his activities for future reference. His hour-by-hour narration of happenings in Malacañang during those two fateful days gives the impression that he took down notes as the events evolved.

## Headlines

Finally, on the question of whether or not Angara was shown a copy of the headlines before they were printed, the answer is in the negative.

Like all other articles submitted to the INQUIRER for publication, the determination of how the articles shall be printed, what photos should accompany them and other matters relating to the presentation of the articles to the readers is the prerogative of the editorial staff.

Subject only to the conditions agreed upon, Angara lost control of the handling of his diary the moment he turned over a copy to the newspaper. He neither asked nor demanded that the headlines to be used for his memoirs be cleared with him. He submitted to the discretion of the newspaper on this point.

The headlines that accompanied the three-part series were based on the editor in chief's evaluation of the substance of the articles as they appeared on the three publication dates. It was an exercise of editorial prerogative.

It should be underscored that in coming out with Angara's diary, the INQUIRER did not make any representation or warranty that his account is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

The editor in chief made it clear in the introductory portion of the first part of the article that the narration of events was made from Angara's point of view. Thus, when PNP Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto and Executive Secretary Renato de Villa took issue with some of Angara's statements, their explanations were promptly published in the succeeding issues.

The true story about the fall of Estrada still has to be written. Many of the personalities who played, one way or the other, significant roles in the events that led to the successful conclusion of People Power II are expected to give their own accounts. It is up to the readers to decide which to believe and which to ignore.

* * *

*The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City." Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.*

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# Other Edsa revolts may be unavoidable

LAWYER Rene Saguisag explained his reason for filing a petition for quo warranto on behalf of deposed President Joseph Estrada in a radio interview. First, he stated that Erap has no plans to reassert himself if his petition to be recognized as the incumbent president is upheld by the Supreme Court. The objective is merely to assert and honor the provision of the Constitution. Second, the one million or so elite crowd that gathered at Edsa does not speak for the 72 million Filipinos of whom 10 million voted for Erap in the last presidential elections.

With regard to his first reason, every one of the 44,000 lawyers in the country will most assuredly have his own position on the matter. We will just leave this to the Supreme Court to resolve if indeed the language of the Constitution lends to varying interpretations. We may just say that the framers of the Constitution did not, in their wildest dreams, anticipate that one day we would elect a president who would be accused of extremely detestable acts so wantonly committed as Erap is now accused, that they did not provide for this unthinkable contingency.

On the matter of the meager one million "mob" consisting of the business, religious and academic communities, reinforced by the critical segment of peasant, labor and student groups, one cannot deny that this represented the best informed and most productive component of the population whose support and cooperation the government badly needs if the nation is to move forward. Erap's 10 million look forward to this group represented at Edsa for leaders and their next meal. One might add that Erap's 10 million were nowhere to be seen except in government-organized gatherings graced by Erap to inaugurate bridges, roads and edifices where free lunch was served.

That so many of our underprivileged compatriots are beguiled into voting for a man like Erap is attributable to the lack of social concern for many decades of the elite represented at Edsa. If the latter had only been more solicitous of the well-being of the deprived beyond their manicured gardens, there may have been no need for Edsa II. Until they wake up to these responsibilities with the government's firm leading hand, every generation of Filipinos may have to keep a painful rendezvous at Edsa in their time.—**E.P. DAKANAY JR., 43 Baltazar St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City**

## 'Dis one's for dem!'

IN THE AFTERNOON of Friday, Jan. 19, I was watching the historic Edsa II rally on television. The police and military generals had just withdrawn their support from Erap, and had by their decision dramatically turned the tide in favor of the people. Noting that the youth had from the start comprised the majority of the crowd, and touched by what I was witnessing, I immediately texted a close friend: "Dis one's for dem!"

My friend, a middle-aged parent like me, texted back: "How Tru! How Tru!"

To our children and their generation: I salute you and I thank you! You have won a major battle, not only for yourselves, but for a truly grateful nation. Go and continue to lead our march, so we can win the war.—**JOSE M. KALAW, 18 Jaime Laya St., BF Homes, Parañaque City**

## Lotto winners are real people

THIS is the response to a letter published on Jan. 16, 2001, regarding the authenticity of the lotto draws.

We at the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office would like to assure the public that the lotto draws are in no way rigged and that, yes, the winners are real people. As a matter of fact, on the very same day the letter was published, news of the jackpot winner from the Visayas was in other newspapers. That winner won P11 million.

The identity of the winners cannot be divulged for security reasons. Having millions of pesos and having everyone know who you are and where you live do not exactly make anyone feel more secure.

Also, our keeping the winners' identities confidential does not necessarily mean that they do not exist (as was insinuated by the letter). Everyone knows about the woman from Sta. Ana who won P44 million and then shared some of her winnings with her less fortunate neighbors. There was also another winner who came out in a TV talk show. Newsman Ruther Batuigas readily admits having won P43 million.

Lotto draws are open to the public. Anyone can go to our main office on E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City, to see the entire procedure. A policy of transparency is adhered to regarding the draws.

The PCSO is committed to serving the public, and again, we assure the people that the money they spend on a lotto or sweepstakes ticket will come back to them in the form of public service, or if they are lucky, in the jackpot prize.—**MANUEL C. GARCIA, manager, PR and publicity department, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, PCSO Complex, E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, QC**

## Glory to capital, hell for labor

CIVIL society groups representing the political views of the middle class have derided the preponderance of recycled *trapos* and retired generals in the new administration. More than that, militant labor decries the dominance of pro-globalization technocrats in the Macapagal administration.

Bert Romulo, Mar Roxas, Emily Boncodin, Dante Canlas and adviser Alex Magno are being hailed as competent technocrats. Yet workers tremble at the mention of their names for they are rabid advocates of globalization that is a scourge to labor.

The Cabinet is shaping up to be an investor-friendly bunch committed to further open up the economy to foreign capital. The much-vaunted Macapagal team is glory to capital but hell for labor. We expect nothing but an investor-first-and-labor-last policy from the new administration.

Ms Macapagal has repeatedly declared that although it's unavoidable, she does not want unbridled globalization. By that she means safety nets must be provided to those sectors adversely affected by globalization.

The working class has heard that line before when Ms Macapagal was just a senator and primary sponsor of the World Trade Organization treaty. Still, the epidemic of contractualization, the hemorrhage of regular jobs, the retrenchment of workers and violations of labor laws have continued unabated. Nothing has changed except that now, "safety nets" will be called "bridging mechanisms." Non-existent safety nets are a bridge to nowhere for millions of contractuals and unemployed.

Ms Macapagal has repeatedly proclaimed her commitment to a "new politics." But all that the workers see is the old politics of accommodation of vested interests that supported Ms Macapagal. Justice Secretary Hernando Perez heads the new team of *trapos*. Perez, like Ms Macapagal, has a checkered career of turncoatism and opportunism: He was in the opposition as minority leader in Congress in 1992 but joined the administration in 1995.

Representatives Mike Defensor and Nani Braganza are merely fresh faces of patronage politics. Lakas stalwart Sonny Belmonte, an accomplice in the distribution of the Omnibus Power Bill payola, is now Speaker of the House.

With former generals identified with former President Ramos in key positions, the Cabinet is not just a boring rerun of the Ramos Cabinet but it is practically a civilian-military junta with constitutional dressing. Ms Macapagal is paying her debts, and paying it generously to the military establishment that was the "swing defection" for Estrada's downfall.

The so-called representatives of civil society like Vicky Garchitorena and Ging Deles are just deodorizers for Ms Macapagal's Cabinet of *trapos* and former generals. They are the Boy Morales and Ed dela Torre of the new administration.—**RENATO B. MAGTUBO, party-list representative, Sanlakas**

## Give her a chance to work

HOW can there be a healing of our land if some individuals or groups continue to criticize or find fault in President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's barely month-old presidency?

When People Power II succeeded in a very peaceful and bloodless manner, many said that God must really love the Filipinos and the Philippines as He obviously listened to and granted their prayers.

I appeal to those critical of the new President and her administration to stop their activities. Please give her a chance to show to the Filipinos and to the whole world that she can be a good President of our Republic as she has promised.—**MIRRIAM SALALEMA, Purok 7, Balaguer, Daraga, Albay**

## People Power II heroine

THERE are many personalities being declared heroes of People Power II. What we are forgetting is the heroine at the impeachment trial, no other than Emma Lim! She was the first brave witness who testified against then President Estrada for his involvement in *jueteng*. She admitted being the "bagwoman" who delivered *jueteng* money to Malacañang.

Lim was the first "whistle-blower" that emerged at the trial—others followed. She should be then credited for her bravery. She should at least be accorded a medal of valor. Sadly, she has been forgotten! Lim risked her life!—**EARL K. WILKINSON, Makati City**

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## The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

# Sunk ship survivor: I was in panic

**HONOLULU—The 35 people on board the 54-meter Japanese fishing vessel Ehime Maru heard a loud thump and felt a shudder. The lights went out and sea water flooded in, mixing with noxious diesel fuel as a US submarine crashed into the hull from the depths of the Pacific.**

Those who could, scrambled to the decks and jumped into the choppy 25 degree Celsius waters to save their lives. The 26 who made it crawled into automatically inflated life rafts floating in a field of debris as their ship sank in 540 meters of water, 32.2 km southeast of Pearl Harbor.

"I was in a panic," survivor Atsushi Kamado, 16, told the Honolulu Star-Bulletin through a translator. "We had believed the boat was completely safe and never thought it would sink." *AP*

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**A RELATIVE** of a victim of the Japanese fishing trawler, which collided with a US submarine in Hawaii arrives at the Uwajima Fisheries High School in western Japan before leaving for Hawaii, Feb. 11. REUTERS

# PM under fire for playing golf as Japan trawler sinks

MORI

TOKYO—Japan's gaffe-prone prime minister, Yoshiro Mori, came under fire on Sunday from politicians and press for continuing with a game of golf after hearing a US nuclear submarine had struck and sunk a Japanese trawler packed with students.

"I don't know how the prime minister first heard of it, but I think he should have stopped playing golf immediately and returned to his office," Takenori Kanzaki, leader of the New Komeito party and the key partner in Mori's ruling coalition, told a television talk show.

Tanzaki's was not a lone voice.

Most major newspapers carried front-page particles and editorials attacking Japan's most unpopular prime minister in years for his decision to finish a round of golf on Saturday morning after he heard that the Japanese trawler had sunk off Hawaii.

Nine people, including four 17-year-old students from a fisheries school, were still missing on Sunday more than 24 hours after the 6,900-ton US nuclear attack submarine USS Greeneville surfaced and struck the 499-ton Ehime Maru off Hawaii.

Mori insisted his decision had been correct, saying it would not do to get flustered in moments of crisis.

"It would not get any of us anywhere if I rushed to (the prime minister's official residence) and got all flustered, without receiving reports," Mori told reporters on Saturday.

"We took the safest course of action."

Mori, who had been playing golf at a country club near Yohohama received word of the accident at around 10:30 a.m. and left for Tokyo shortly before 1 p.m.

"Prime Minister waits four hours" screamed the headline on the front page of the Asahi Shimbun newspaper.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said Mori's decision had caused no problems since he was issuing instructions from the golf course by mobile telephone.

Newspapers leaped on Mori's decision, quoting defense experts and political analysts as saying the prime minister took too long to grasp the gravity of the situation.

The timing could hardly be worse. A survey of voters by the daily Mainichi Shimbun last week showed support for Mori, battered by scandals that have felled three cabinet ministers and his reputation for blunders, at a mere 14 percent.

His predecessor, the late Keizo Obuchi, was criticized for going for a haircut just five minutes after his Cabinet set up a task force to deal with the aftermath of a Tokyo subway train collision that killed three people and injured 31 last March. *Reuters*

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0342, Series of 2001

# Wahid confident in face of attacks

SURABAYA, Indonesia—Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid, fending off calls to resign from parliament and several Muslim and student groups, is feeling stronger by the day and will survive attempts to oust him, observers and community leaders in his heartland say.

"With every passing day he's feeling more and more comfortable," Wahid's biographer, Australian academic Greg Barton, said.

Barton was speaking in the crowded courtyard of the Al Anwar Mosque in the East Java town of Pasuruan, about 60 km south of Surabaya, while Wahid was inside praying in the bosom of his most devout supporters.

As Wahid's motorcade entered the languid seaside town—on a mission to calm his supporters after a week of attacks on opposition offices—the virtually blind Muslim scholar would not have seen the pledges of devotion emblazoned on banners across Pasuruan's leafy avenues:

"Gus, fight on. We are behind you," read one, using the Javanese honorific for revered leaders.

"For the sake of the nation, we are ready to follow your order Gus."

But the more explicit pledges were delivered verbally.

"We are ready to die to defend you," proclaimed a member of the congregation during Wahid's post-prayer dialogue with his followers.

"My blood will flow for Gus Dur (Wahid's nickname)," one of the hundreds of black-beret and sunglasses-wearing men in camouflage military fatigues guarding the mosque, said.

The uniformed men, who outnumbered police, were from the paramilitary guards loyal to Wahid, known as Banser, who claim to number at least half a million.

"Write this down, I will fight for Gus Dur till the last drop of my blood," Haji Muhammad Nur said as he left the mosque.

The urges to fight on are not exclusively from the Nhadlatul Ulama, the Muslim organization Wahid used to head.

Surabaya's Roman Catholic bishop, Johnannes Hadiwikarta, said Wahid should hold on to the presidency until 2004, and that he had been given the mandate.

"You can't just toss him out... he must be given the time to finish his programs," he said.

Hadiwikarta was among community and religious leaders holding an open forum with Wahid in Surabaya during Friday's visit.

Wahid's visit followed days of unrest by his supporters in the wake of his censure by parliament for his alleged role in two corruption scandals totaling almost $6million. *AFP*

# Israel shuns UN rights probe team

JERUSALEM—A UN team met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Gaza on Saturday at the start of a week-long inquiry into human rights violations in the occupied territories that Israel has said it will shun.

The meeting came as the Israeli army told Jewish settlers in Gaza's Netzarim settlement to take to shelters after a mortar was fired at one of their houses during a day of Palestinian protests against Israeli occupation.

No casualties reported from the mortar attack.

UN commission member John Dugard said after meeting Arafat in Gaza that the delegation planned to "investigate and to examine the situation as best we can".

"Unfortunately the Israeli government has indicated it will not cooperate with us, but there are facts that can to be found by other means and we will do our best to get... a full picture of what is happening, and on that basis we will make our reports and make our recommendations," he told reporters.

The UN mission plans to visit Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank to prepare a report for the annual UN Commission on Human Rights meeting that starts on March 19.

Israel has described as "vile, violent and one-sided" a UN resolution passed in October that charged it with war crimes.

Fresh confrontations were reported on Saturday between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian stone-throwers at various West Bank and Gaza sites.

Arab leaders warned that hardline policies of Israel's new leader Ariel Sharon could cause a Middle East catastrophe.

"If he follows the same attitude we know and have been reading about, we are heading for a disaster in the area," Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdel-Meguid said in Amman.

"His country, Israel, will not be spared and will suffer as the area will suffer," Abdel-Meguid, in the Jordanian capital for a meeting of Arab foreign ministers, said.

Jordan's King Abdullah told Sharon in a letter that the Middle East could "return to a state of anarchy and instability" if peace talks with Palestinians did not begin where they left off under his predecessor Ehud Barak, the official Petra news agency said.

The prime minister-elect planned to meet Barak on Sunday for a second round of talks since Tuesday's election, which swept Sharon to power. Barak's office said the meeting would be a "continuation of the security diplomatic update."

Sharon, trying to forge a coalition government and pass the state budget by late March or face new elections, was due to meet other Labor Party members on Sunday to discuss forming a coalition strong enough to face a Palestinian uprising.

Arafat, speaking in English after his meeting with the UN members, said he had briefed them on "what we are suffering, and the escalation everywhere, the siege of our towns and villages and cities, the closures everywhere...."

Israel closed Palestinian West Bank areas at the start of their four-month-long uprising against Israeli occupation, citing security reasons. Palestinians say the closure is collective punishment that cripples their economy.

Sharon has said he is "ready to take steps to make life easier" for Palestinians, but violence must stop first. *Reuters*

# Emergency aid reaches Afghans facing death

HERAT, Afghanistan—Emergency aid arrived by road and air on Saturday for some 80,000 Afghans who have fled war and drought to UN camps outside the ancient city of Herat, only to face death from bitter cold.

The influx of assistance reflected the deepening crisis in Afghanistan, where 21 years of war and the worst drought in three decades have forced an estimated half a million people from their homes.

But it came too late for those who died of cold in Herat at the end of January. The toll will never be known, but has been placed at anywhere from 150 to 504, almost all of them children.

A US plane landed at a runway outside the town in the morning with thousands of blankets, tents and water cans for the residents of camps set up by the United Nations to cope with the flood of people fleeing the impoverished countryside.

At the same time, the first trucks of an 11-vehicle UN convoy arrived from the Afghan capital Kabul with 10,000 quilts purchased from another aid project that has been training women to earn a living.

Although temperatures have recovered from the minus 25 Celsius levels at the end of January, the Afghans sheltered at six different UN camps are still in dire need of assistance. Three families are jammed into each tent.

"The important thing is not exactly how many people died," Hans-Christian Poulsen, coordinator for UN humanitarian programs in the region, said of the conflicting accounts of the death toll. But he also hastened to add his examination of the size of graves in the nearby cemetery showed that 90 percent of victims were children.

"The important thing is the conditions that 80,000 people are living under and that the number will be going past the 100,000 mark," he said.

One man at Shadaie camp, which houses 20,000 people, said he had lost an infant son to the cold, one of eight people to die in the cluster of 50 shelters in his section of the camp. Mazallah's (one name) mud house, shared with 12 other people, is heated by bringing glowing pieces of charcoal inside.

The camps around Herat, which had once been a capital of the empire assembled by the Mongol conqueror Tamerlane, date from the ruling Taleban movement's 1995 capture of the city. Less than a year ago they were empty.

The complete failure of the crop last year started a desperate migration. They are arriving in Herat from the rugged provinces of Badghis and Ghowar. But even a heavy snowfall this month, which could signal the return of normal rains, may not get them back to their villages.

Most of those in the Herat camps, like those elsewhere in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan, have sold everything to reach the relative safety of the refugee camps. *Reuters*

**FEATHER BOYS** AP

Thousands of spectators crowd the steps of Sydney Opera House during the launch of the 2001 Gay and Lesbian Festival in Australia, Feb. 10. The three-week gay pride cultural event allowed transvestites to rub shoulders with tourists at the free, glitzy open-air party on a warm summer night with Sydney's famous landmark spectacularly lit for the occasion. The festival ends March 4.

# Australian Labor Party claims win

PERTH, Australia—The Labor Party claimed a stunning victory in Western Australia's state elections Sunday after a massive swing to the left that will set alarm bells ringing in federal Prime Minister John Howard's conservative coalition.

State Labor Party leader Geoff Gallop, a close friend of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, will be the huge state's next leader.

Howard was quick to deny that the result would alarm his government.

"But I don't need to be told not to be complacent about the next federal election," he conceded. "I know it'll be a tough fight."

Howard leads a two-term conservative coalition made up of the same two parties ousted in Western Australia. He is expected to call a federal election in October or November.

Confirming fears that the far right One Nation party is bouncing back from near oblivion, the party also polled strongly.

With more than 80 percent of the vote counted, One Nation, the party led by former fish and chip shop owner Pauline Hanson, was polling 9.4 percent but the distribution of the votes made it unlikely the party would have any lawmakers in the 57-seat legislature. It was, however, likely to win up to three seats in the upper house.

In some rural electorates, One Nation was polling up to 20 percent according to figures released by the Australian Broadcasting Corp. based on returns from the Western Australian Electoral Commission.

"It's a clear indication that we weren't written off. We were just simmering away," Hanson told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio.

One Nation, which advocates a ban on Asian immigration and tough policies on Australia's Aborigines, burst onto the political scene in 1998 but since then infighting and funding scandals have come close to destroying it. *AP*

# HK exec says no plan to clamp down on sect

HONG KONG—Amid calls from pro-Beijing forces to clamp down on Falun Gong, Justice Secretary Elsie Leung said Sunday she has no plan to enact a law against the meditation sect, which is banned in mainland China.

Leung said she "hasn't received any instruction" from the government to establish any law to restrict the sect, which has been criticized by pro-Beijing forces as evil and associated with Western forces in an anti-China conspiracy.

On Thursday, Hong Kong's leader Tung Chee-hwa became the first government official in the territory to call the group a "cult." The chief executive said the government will closely monitor the group's activities but added that the controversy over the group won't prompt Hong Kong to speed up the legislation of an anti-subversion law.

Following Tung's line, Leung reiterated Sunday that the public should not to be too concerned about enactment of the anti-subversion law, which the government must pass at some point now that the former British colony has returned to China.

Leung said the government would take public opinion into account before deciding to pass the legislation.

Falun Gong has come under attack from the mainland Chinese government and pro-Beijing groups in the territory since the Hong Kong government allowed it to hold an international conference last month at a public concert hall, where sect followers openly attacked Beijing's "brutal crackdown."

Although Falun Gong is banned in China, the group remains legal in Hong Kong, where citizens enjoy considerably more freedom than their counterparts on the mainland. *AP*

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# Cops identify remains as those of British bar hostess missing in Japan

TOKYO—Police have identified the dismembered remains found in a beachside cave near Tokyo as those of a British bar hostess who disappeared in July, authorities said Saturday.

"We have determined the identity of the body and it is an unfortunate outcome for the parents and family of Lucie" Blackman, Tokyo police investigator Akira Hiromitsu said.

"Experts agreed that the teeth of the body matched with her dental records. There is no discrepancy in the height and the hair was blonde," he said.

A DNA analysis is expected to take seven to 10 days, and the cause of death is still under investigation. Police presume she died at the time of her disappearance, Hiromitsu said.

"Obviously this is a very sad and traumatic time for us," the Blackman family said in a statement issued in England. "We are looking forward to bringing Lucie home in the near future."

The body was dug up near the seaside apartment of a Japanese businessman who was arrested in October and accused of drugging and raping several women, including a Canadian hostess and another Briton.

The man pleaded innocent in both cases, saying he had consensual sex with the women. He was not charged in relation to Blackman.

Now, "it is definite that we will charge him with abandoning a corpse," Hiromitsu said.

The businessman was said to be a regular at bars in Tokyo where foreign hostesses pour drinks, light cigarettes and make conversation with men willing to pay as much as $100 an hour for the service.

Blackman, 22, a former British Airways flight attendant, was working in a Tokyo bar when she disappeared on July 1. She had told a friend she was going on a drive to the ocean with a customer who promised to buy her a mobile phone.

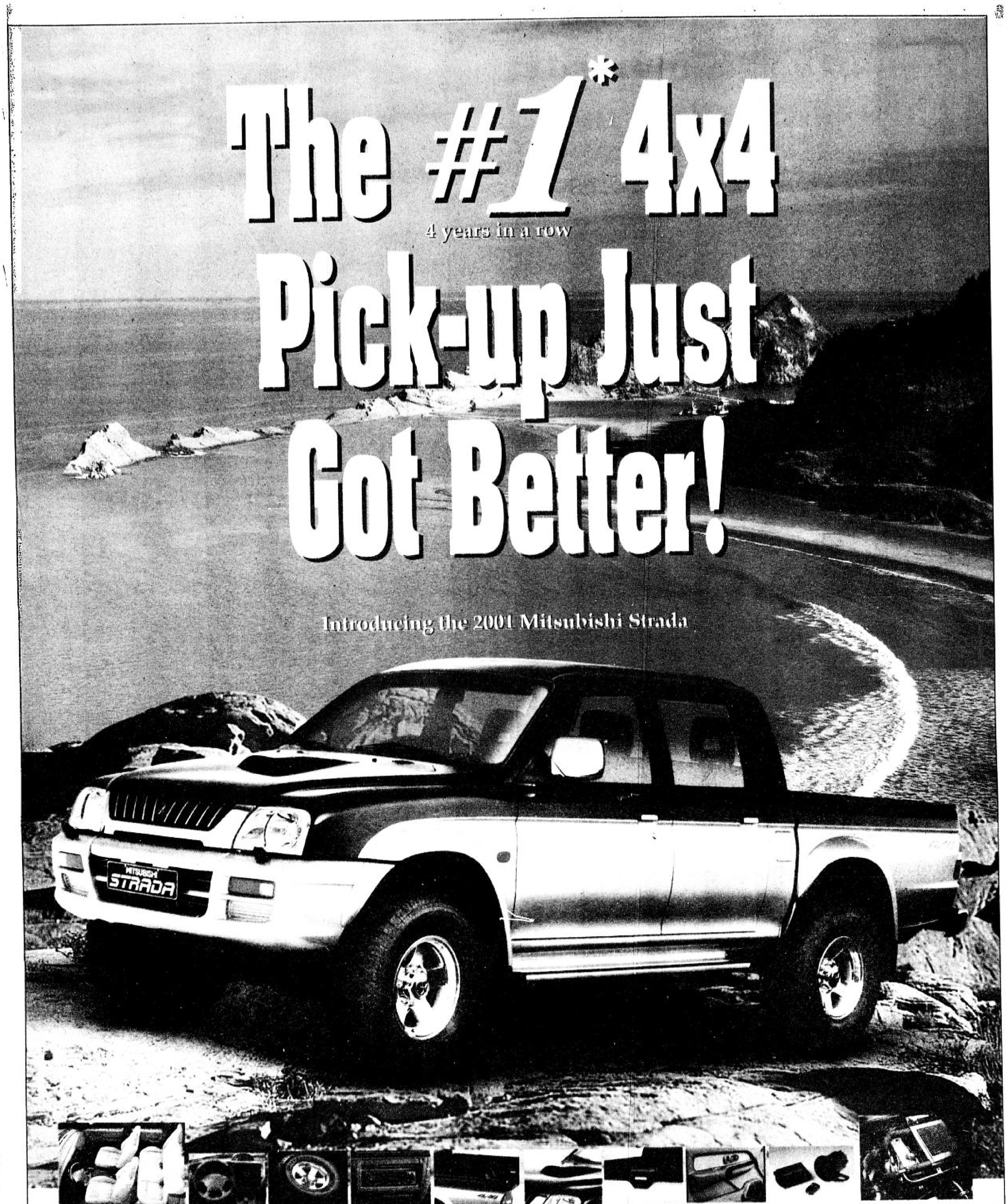
Soon after, her roommate got a call from someone who said she had joined a religious cult and would not be back.

Her disappearance led to one of Japan's highest-profile missing persons cases in years. Her father came to Japan to conduct his own search and later made a personal appeal to Prime Minister Tony Blair and other British politicians for help.

The case highlighted concerns over the vulnerability of foreign women working in the murky world of the Japanese bar trade. Many do not have proper visas, making it difficult for them seek the protection of the law.

Most bar hostesses are not European, but from Asia, or as far away as Colombia and Romania, where women pay gangs for fake passports or paper marriages, incurring debts that may take years to pay off. *AP*

**BRITISH** bar hostess Lucie Blackman is shown in this undated picture released from the British Embassy in Tokyo. Police identified the dismembered remains found in beachside cave as those of Blackman, Feb. 10. AP



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# Thai party gets majority in parliament after merger

BANGKOK—A minor political party with 14 lawmakers merged with Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai party on Sunday, handing it an unprecedented majority in parliament.

The Seritham party has joined Thai Rak Thai unconditionally, its leader Prachuab Chaiyasarn told a news conference attended by Thaksin. The legal process to complete the merger will take about 45 days.

Prachuab and Thaksin rejected suggestions that the merger was the result of a deal to give Seritham a Cabinet post in return for providing Thai Rak Thai a parliamentary majority.

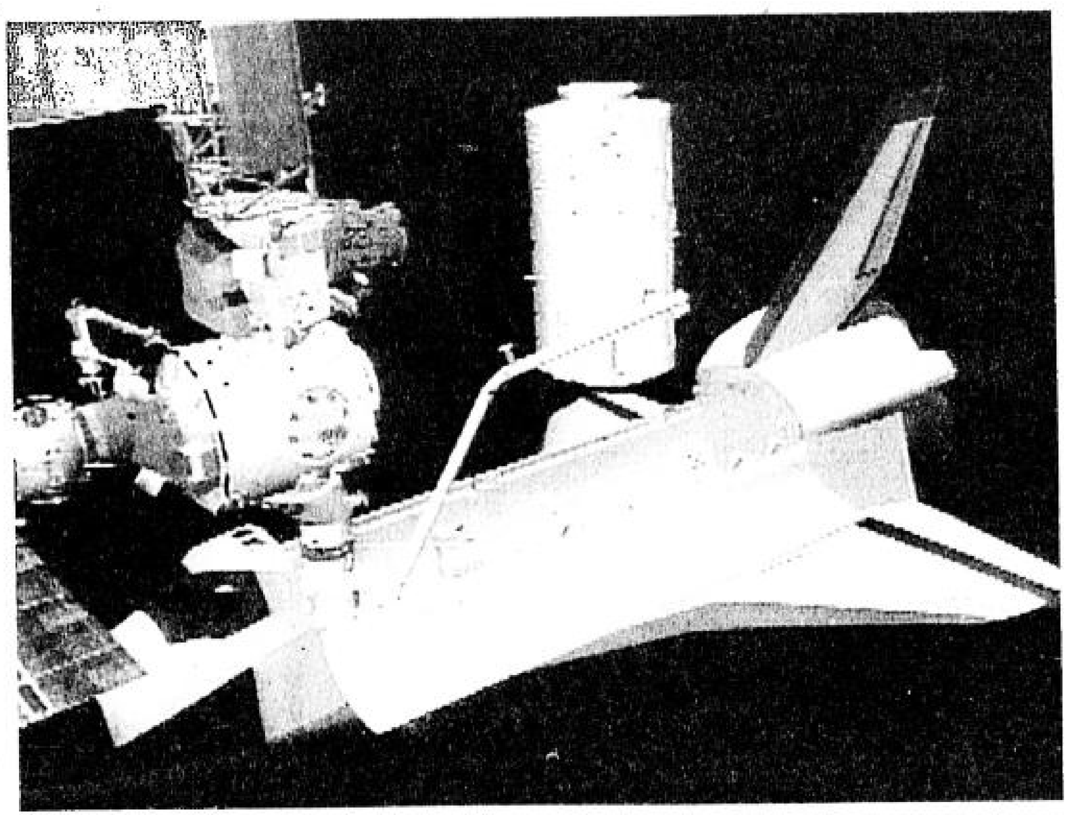
'There will be no conditions or factions in the party. I tell you that anyone who will be in the Cabinet will have to work hard," said Thaksin, a telecommunications tycoon and one of Thailand's richest men.

His Thai Rak Thai, or Thai Love Thai party, won 248 of the 500 seats in the House of Representatives in the Jan. 6 parliamentary elections. With 14 Seritham seats, the party will control 262 seats, the first time any Thai party has secured a majority in Parliament.

Thai Rak Thai has the additional support of 77 deputies from two other parties in the governing coalition, making it the most stable government the country has ever had.

Seritham, or Liberal Democrats, was formed in 1992 in the aftermath of a military coup by Arthit Urirath, one of Thailand's most prominent pro-democracy advocates. But despite heralding the wave of democracy that ended military rule in Thailand, Seritham could never rise to national prominence as it grew progressively weak with internal rifts.

*AP*



**A DIAGRAM** showing the space shuttle Atlantis with the cylindrical $1.4-billion Destiny laboratory (center) attached to the shuttle's robot arm. The Destiny laboratory was lifted out of Atlantis' payload Feb. 10.

REUTERS

# Astronauts complete installations of lab module on space craft

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—Astronauts from the space shuttle Atlantis on Saturday completed the delicate, painstaking task of lifting a $1.4 billion laboratory module from the shuttle and mounting it on the International Space Station.

The job was a nail-biter and required two astronauts to work outside the spacecraft. Floating in the vacuum of space some 370 km above Earth, they gave directions to a third astronaut, Marsha Ivins, working blind as she maneuvered the lab with the shuttle's robotic arm from the spacecraft's payload bay.

A mishap occurred when spacewalker Robert Curbeam was sprayed with ammonia while connecting a coolant line between the lab and space station. Curbeam was protected by his spacesuit and the flow was quickly staunched, Nasa said. Mission Control ordered a thorough decontamination of his suit before Curbeam returned to the shuttle.

The Destiny lab is the single most expensive component of the space station, whose ultimate purpose is scientific research. Nasa could not afford to build a backup, so the success of this mission was critical to the completion of the $95 billion orbiting outpost, targeted for 2006.

Before Destiny could be hoisted into place on Saturday, Ivins had to use the 15-meter arm to remove a docking port from the end of the Unity module, where Destiny would be permanently berthed.

To lighten the mood, shuttle commander Ken Cockrell played the country and western standard "Please Release Me" before his crew unlatched the port.

When Mission Control suggested Cockrell might have a future as a disc jockey, he replied: "That's if you let us come back. Let's see if we can get this job done first."

The International Space Station is a joint project of the United States, Russia, Japan, Europe and Canada.

Since the first space-station module was launched from Russia in 1998, work has focused on making the complex livable, with air, water, climate controls and supplies. Destiny's arrival is the fist step in building up the station's scientific capabilities. A crew has been aboard the station since last November.

On Saturday, Ivins was aided throughout the operation by spacewalkers Curbeam and Tom Jones, who became her eyes during much of the work. Her view from the shuttle's crew cabin was blocked most of the time, and video feeds were not always helpful.

"I've got essentially worthless cameras, worthless views," she said as she prepared to lift Destiny from the berth where it rode to space on Wednesday.

"You've got plenty of clearance. If you come straight out you're clear," Curbeam said.

In fact, Ivins had just about two inches of clearance. Destiny, a silvery cylinder 8.5 meters long and 4.6 meters wide, was a tight fit in the cargo bay.

*Reuters*

# Bush vows $1.4B worth of military pay raise

WASHINGTON—Kicking off a week devoted to national security, President George W. Bush on Saturday promised the American military a $1.4 billion pay raise and US allies "a clear, consistent and decisive" foreign policy.

Bush turned to defense and international issues in his weekly radio address after focusing on education, tax cuts, and faith-based initiatives in the three weeks since his Jan. 20 swearing in as the 43rd US president.

Making his first out-of-town trips, Bush planned to go to military bases in West Virginia, Georgia and Virginia. On Friday, he adds his first foreign visit—a day trip to Mexico for talks with President Vicente Fox.

Calling national security "the most basic commitment," Bush, who has ordered a fundamental reevaluation of the military and the US defense posture, added: "Whenever America acts in the world, our principles must be certain, our intentions beyond doubt, our strength be unchallenged."

Bush heads to the State Department on Thursday where cameras will be allowed to catch the symbolism of a meeting with Colin Powell, the secretary of state he said he chose because of the "soldier's perspective" the retired general brings to diplomacy.

"His charge is to help me pursue a clear, consistent and decisive foreign policy," Bush said. "This is how conflict is avoided. This is how problems are dealt with before they become crises."

Bush has asked Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to conduct a "top-to-bottom" study of the military, including its strategy, missions, modernization priorities and nuclear weapons arsenal.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said directives on reviewing US nuclear deterrence, improving the quality of life in the armed services and the structure of the military were at the staff level and would be signed by Bush soon.

The reviews might take until summer to complete, he said.

Bush has said he would not ask Congress for an "early supplemental," or an add-on to the current $297 billion Pentagon budget, until the reviews were complete.

But he will make good on the pay boost for the armed forces promised during his presidential campaign. In addition to the $1.4 billion across the board hike, a White House aide said Bush also proposed spending $1 billion on extra incentives such as bonuses for highly skilled personnel.

*Reuters*

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# UN workers struggle to rescue fleeing Guinea refugees

KATKAMA, Guinea—United Nations aid workers struggled on Saturday to rescue tens of thousands of terrified refugees caught in a fresh wave of fighting between government troops and rebels in southern Guinea.

UN refugee agency UNHCR, which has called the Guinean crisis its worst humanitarian emergency, said an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 refugees had now regrouped in an abandoned camp at Katkama after fleeing in panic from a nearby camp on Friday.

Another 5,000 people were believed to be still walking on the road to Kissidougou, where UNHCR operations are based, negotiating their way with Guinean troops through heavily guarded checkpoints.

In the partially destroyed camp of Katkama, little more than a collection of crumbling mud huts, thousands of refugees with little access to water or food waited under a scorching sun for UNHCR convoys to move them to a safer location.

As fighting appeared to have subsided, aid workers mounted an operation there on Saturday to truck as many refugees as possible away from the Gueckedou region, where fresh fighting broke out on Friday.

Meanwhile, Guinean troops headed south in the opposite direction to reinforce soldiers deployed in defensive positions near Gueckedou.

"This morning... there was a stampede to reach the trucks," said Alphonse Munyaneze, a UNHCR official at Katkama camp.

"My intention is to load as many as possible, but you don't want to send people like Coca-Cola bottles."

Panic spread among refugees at Nyaedou camp, which is just 17 km north of Gueckedou, when the sound of artillery and heavy gunfire reached them on Friday.

Reuters reporters at the scene said the majority of the camp's estimated 30,000 refugees had fled on foot, some of them walking some 25 km to reach Katkama.

An unspecified number of people had dispersed in the surrounding forest and were unaccounted for. *Reuters*

# Indian quake victims wait 'until death' for support

BHUJ, India—There are roaming cows, a vegetable seller, a temple, a soda shop and a motorcycle garage along the road that leads into the center of Bhuj, a town near the epicenter of India's devastating earthquake.

The two sights that predominate, however, are miles of flattened shops and houses, and lines of waiting people.

They stand in queues for food and water. They sit in rows in the dirt waiting for relief trucks to pass out supplies. They lie on cots in front of makeshift bamboo and burlap shelters, waiting for someone to give them materials, money and help to rebuild their homes.

The road, once bustling with stores and restaurants like the airport highways of most cities, is now almost still. The exception is the trucks, their wooden sides painted in lime green and orange, that pick up relief supplies at the air force base and speed along to make deliveries.

"If someone helps, we will fix up the house and move back in," says Romad Mubarak, 35, wrapped in a red sari, with gold ornaments in her nose and ears. She has gathered a few pieces of straw and is trying to make it into a whisk broom as she lies on a cot in the shadow of a burlap curtain sheltering her four children from the blazing sun.

Four goats are tethered around the shelter, pitched in front of the stones that were once part of the blue-painted home of Mubarak's 15-member family.

There are six men in the family and Mubarak is surrounded by neighbors as she shades her eyes against the blazing sun.

Asked if there were not enough family and friends to rebuild the house, Mubarak said, laughing, "Hopefully, the government would do that. No one is helping others without food or money."

As her neighbors crowd forward to listen, she says, "If someone needs help desperately, the people would help a little."

How long would she wait for the government to rebuild her house?

"Until death," she said, laughing again.

A few meters down the road six men sit in white plastic chairs in the shade of a crumbled cafe. One makes tea over coals on a bamboo cart. One is reading a newspaper. The others are chatting.

"Currently we have no jobs. We don't want to do any minimum wage jobs," said Pravinbhai Bharmal, 50, who used to serve tea in the cafe. He goes to the relief lines each day to get a cooked meal of vegetables, rice and bread, then sits with his friends until sunset.

"We are depending on others," he said. "We need a boss or a customer to do a job, and no one is there."

Bharmal, his wife and five daughters sleep in a friend's tent by the roadside, he said, because they have been unable to get one of the tents being handed out by aid agencies.

His family had built the house that collapsed around them during the 7.7-magnitude earthquake on Jan. 26. Some of the stones could be used, but he needs cement and money to pay laborers to rebuild it. *AP*

# Burma troops, rebels clash; 2 dead, 37 hurt

BANGKOK—Heavy fighting between Burma troops and a rebel group spilled into Thailand Sunday, leaving two civilians dead and 37 soldiers injured, the Thai Army said.

The fighting took place in at least three Burma border areas between government soldiers and the Shan State Army, a guerrilla group fighting for independence for the ethnic Shan minority.

There was no word on casualties from the Burma side. The Burma government did not immediately issue any statement.

Thai Army spokesperson Somkuan Sangpataranet said that Burma troops fired a barrage of shells at the guerrillas, and some rockets landed across the border in the northern Thai town of Mae Sai, killing two people.

He said Thai troops fought a gun battle with about 200 Burmese soldiers who intruded into Thai soil in the nearby Mae Fah Luang district while chasing the Shan rebels. Seven Thai soldiers were injured in the fighting, he said.

The Burma troops captured 19 soldiers who were rescued later by a Thai unit, the area's Army commander, Lt. Gen. Wathanachai Chaimuanwong, told reporters. Some 30 Burma soldiers were injured in the fighting with the Shan Army, he said.

"We cannot accept the movement of the Burma Army and we consider it an attempt to harm our territorial integrity," Wathanachai said.

According to unconfirmed reports, two Burma soldiers were killed, Col. Somsuk Suansombat, a Thai army intelligence officer, said.

A border committee was negotiating with the Burma troops to withdraw from the mountainous area, where the border is often fuzzy and where an uneasy truce prevails.

Somkuan, the army spokesperson, said Burma troops also fired automatic rifles at a Thai army helicopter on a supply mission flight over Mae Aye, which is 100 km from Mae Sai. The aircraft was damaged but it landed safely, he said. *AP*

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| **•WORK SIMPLIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT TECHNIQUES** | | |
| February 17, 2001 | Saturday | 1:00PM–5:00PM |
| **•PROJECT MANAGEMENT** | | |
| February 24 – March 17, 2001 | Saturday | 1:00PM–5:00PM |
| **•SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING** | | |
| February 19 – March 2, 2001 | M-W-F | 6:00PM–8:00PM |
| **•CUSTOMER RELATIONS AND HANDLING COMPLAINTS** | | |
| February 17, 2001 | Saturday | 1:00PM–5:00PM |
| **•OFFICE MANAGEMENT FOR PERSONNEL ASSISTANTS** | | |
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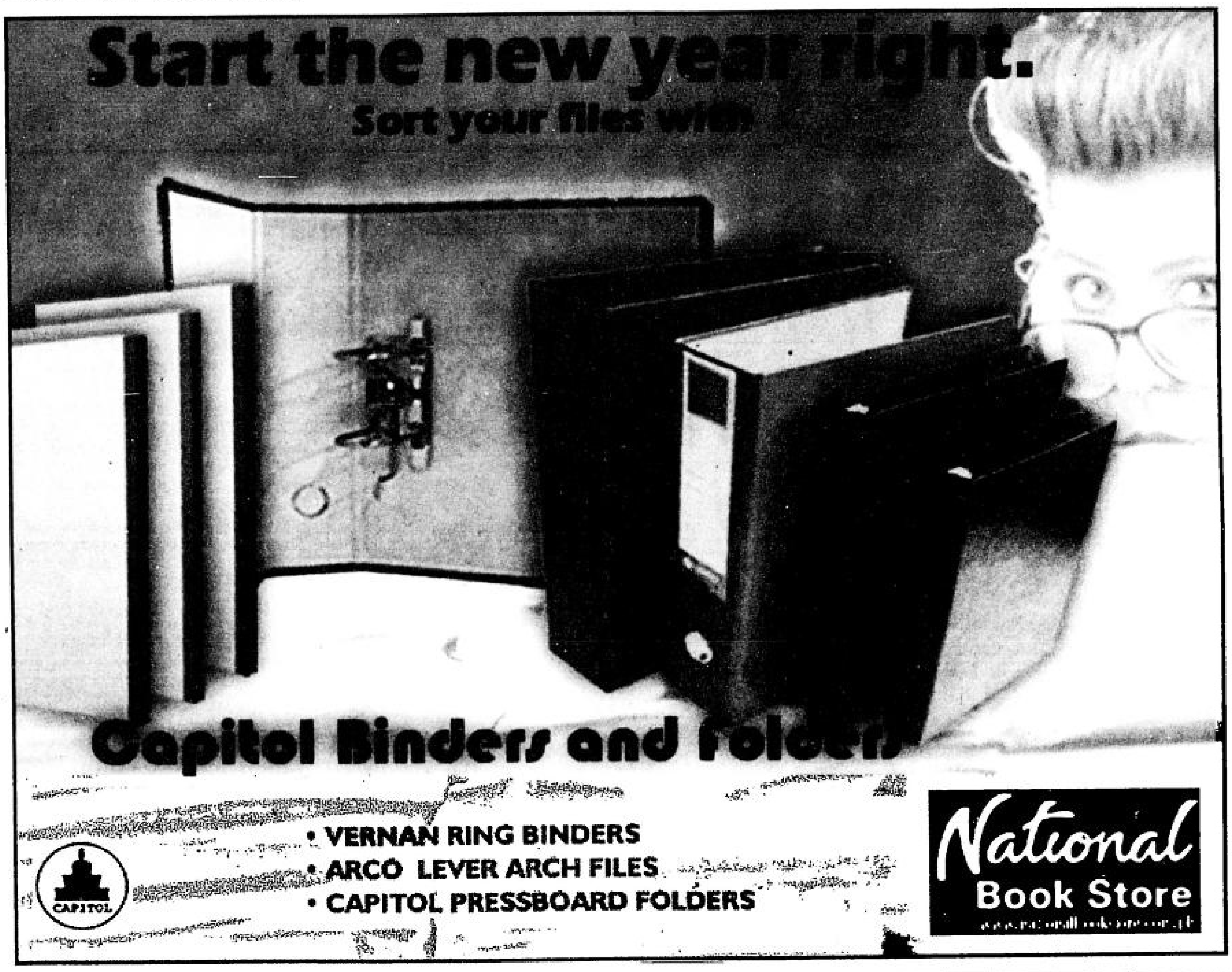

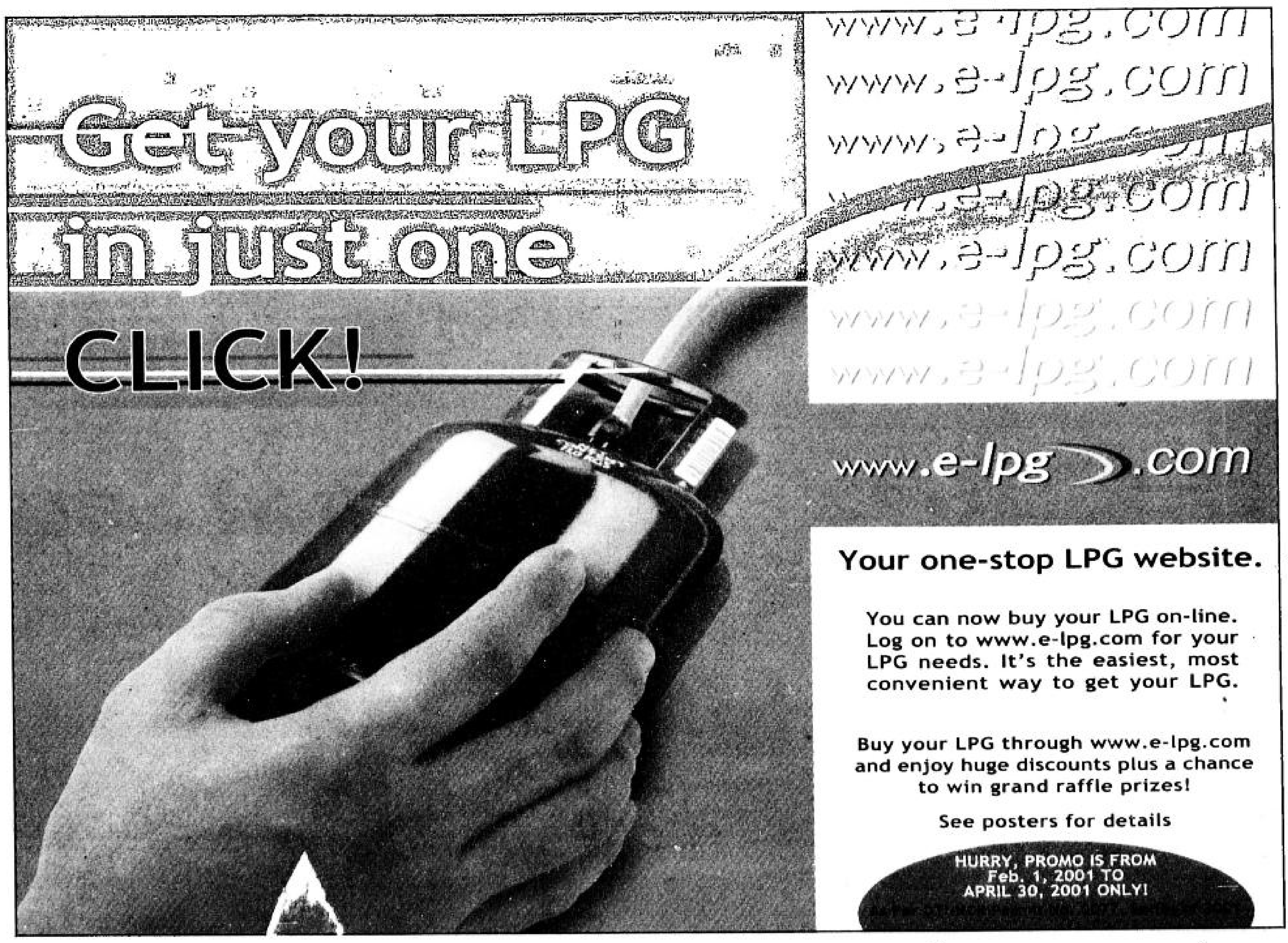

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# Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

## Left: FVR really in power

### Gloria accused of 'leveling field' for former President

DAVAO CITY—A leftist organization here had accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of creating a political system that favors former President Fidel Ramos.

Leaders of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Ms Macapagal was "leveling the playing field" for the former general and defense secretary.

Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general, said President Macapagal is actually "tilting the balance" of government leadership in favor of "Ramos and his boys" instead of opening her administration to people with track record and integrity in the advocacy of people's issues.

Luque said they were alarmed by Ms Macapagal's announcement that she was "replicating" the "level playing field" that the former President had boasted he helped create during his tenure.

He added that it was also alarming for Ms Macapagal to dismiss criticisms made by militant groups on her Cabinet appointees.

"Clearly, the Macapagal administration has leveled the playing field but not for the general public and the poor but exclusively only for the few rich and the big business (groups)," Luque said.

He said the poor had been cast aside in the "frenzy" of development projects, demolitions, privatization and trade liberalization policies that reached their peak during the Ramos administration.

Luque said pursuing the Ramos programs and policies will mean "disaster" for the poor.

Luque noted that Ramos' "leveling the playing field policies" gave birth to the controversial concepts of globalization, deregulation and privatization.

He said when Ramos adopted such a policy, many workers lost their jobs while small and homegrown businesses closed shop when they failed to survive foreign competition.

Robinson Montalba, chair of the Promotion of Church People's Response, also said Ms Macapagal should remember that her accountability is not to Ramos but first and foremost to the people who braved the streets and fought for the ouster of Joseph Estrada as president.

Ms Macapagal owes her tenure to the public, he said.

Montalba said by aligning closer to the "Ramos clique," Macapagal is veering away from the spirit of people power and may be unable to create a just and equitable society.

*Jowel Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

## ROUNDUP

### 2 dead in collision

CABATUAN, Isabela—Two people were killed and six others were wounded Friday when a tricycle and a motorcycle collided on the national highway here. Killed were Junior Vallejo and Roger Estrada. The injured were taken to the Ester Garcia General Hospital.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### NPAs step up recruitment

CAMP MELCHOR DE LA CRUZ, Isabela—The New People's Army has stepped up its recruitment efforts in the remote villages of Kalinga. Army officials said the rebels, led by a certain Antonio Cagwayan alias Ka Senyas, even recruited minors which, they said, was a clear violation of the rules of engagement agreed upon in the Geneva Convention.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### Rapist gets 2 life terms

ROXAS, Isabela—A judge here sentenced a man to two life terms for raping his stepdaughter. Judge Teodulo Mirasol of the regional trial court ordered the man to pay the girl, who was first abused when she was 12 years old, P125,000 for moral and exemplary damages. The court said the man had threatened to kill his stepdaughter if she would narrate her ordeal to her mother.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### Doctor found dead

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—A medical doctor from Baguio City who was reported missing on Tuesday was found dead in a remote village in Tayug town on Wednesday. Reports from the Tayug police said the body of Dr. Erwin Ignacio, 34, bore 14 stab wounds when found by residents in a dike along the national highway. Ignacio was identified through school fee receipts in his wallet. Police have yet to ascertain the motive in the killing.

*Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

## WEATHER FORECAST

**FORECAST:** Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms.. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Manila<br>Hi 32° Lo 23° | Baguio<br>Hi 24° Lo 13° | Tuguegarao<br>Hi 32° Lo 21° | Laoag<br>Hi 32° Lo 22° |
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| Gen. Santos<br>Hi 32° Lo 23° | Zamboanga<br>Hi 32° Lo 24° | Cagayan de Oro<br>Hi 32° Lo 22° | Davao<br>Hi 31° Lo 24° |

Compiled by: Chona B. Galang, PDI Research

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## Farmer leads Army men to mass grave of rebels

COTABATO CITY—Government forces on Tuesday discovered a mass grave of suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels who were slain during the Army offensive on Camp Abubakar in Maguindanao last year.

The shallow grave also led to the discovery of explosives and rocket-propelled grenades still attached to the fallen guerrillas.

Capt. Ricardo Ellorda, deputy spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said a farmer stumbled upon the grave in his farm on Monday and reported it to Marines who were deployed to the former MILF main base in Camp Abubakar.

The unidentified farmer, whom the Army said was a former MILF fighter, said he found explosives and grenades protruding in his farm lot while he was tilling the cornfield in Sitio Masibay, Barangay Langkong in Matanog town.

The Army retrieved the explosives and coordinated with the local officials of Matanog for the proper retrieval of the remains of the nine rebels.

Ellorda said the fallen rebels were part of the MILF contingent that defended the perimeter defense of Camp Abubakar during the military's air and ground assaults in May last year.

Today, Matanog Mayor Nasser Imam will accompany the military and the guerrillas' relatives to the grave site to exhume the remains and bury them in a designated place.

Asked on the possibility that the remains were those of civilians caught in the crossfire, Ellorda said the military is certain that they were rebels as confirmed by a former MILF guerrilla.

"He was a survivor in that particular incident, so he knew every detail of the discovery," Ellorda said.

In Sitio Kotongan, Barangay Batang Bagras, Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, nine *lumads* were killed by suspected MILF rebels.

Quoting reports from the 6th Marine Battalion Landing Team, Ellorda said the rebels, under the command of a certain Nano Pangansaan, swooped down on the village early this week and executed the natives whom they suspected of being military informers.

Ellorda said the attackers also burned at least a dozen houses.

The guerrillas also took hostage nine other residents. They were taken by the fleeing rebels and used as human shields against pursuing Marine soldiers.

The fate of the nine hostages remains unknown.

*Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

## Metropolitan Iloilo created

ILOILO CITY—There is now a Metro Iloilo composed of Iloilo City and the nearby towns of Leganes, Pavia, San Miguel and Oton with the launching here on Friday of the Metropolitan Iloilo Development Council (MIDC).

Mayors Mansueto Malabor of Iloilo City, Adolfo Jaen of Leganes, Carina Flores of Oton, Ervin Gerochi of Pavia and Avito Saclauso of San Miguel signed the memorandum of agreement for the creation of the MIDC at the Amigo Terrace Hotel.

The MIDC was created because "the rapid growth of population and the corresponding increase of social and economic requirements of (the) contiguous local governments of Iloilo City, Leganes, Pavia, Oton and San Miguel call for simultaneous and integrated development," the agreement read.

With a combined population of about 456,170, Metro Iloilo will have Pavia as its agro-industrial center and Leganes as its center for heavy industries. San Miguel will be the agricultural basket while Oton will serve as the residential area.

The four towns will serve as the "satellites" of Iloilo City that will remain as the center for residential, commercial, financial and industrial activities.

*Hazel Villa, PDI Visayas Bureau*

## Shooting leads to judge's beating

LEGAZPI CITY—A regional trial court judge in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro was beaten to death by four students in a videoke bar in the town's center at about 11 p.m. Sunday.

RTC Branch 45 presiding Judge Hassan Ibnohajil, 43, suffered fractured ribs and head and body wounds, among others, as a result of the beating and died at the provincial hospital before he could be airlifted for further treatment in Metro Manila.

Police said Ibnohajil shot Roi Ainza and Ainza's brothers Abet and Cesar, cousin Carlos and friend Ferdinand Mabalot retaliated by beating up the judge.

Ainza died on the spot after he was shot.

*Floreño Solv[illegible], PDI Southern [illegible] Bureau*

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# Townsfolk hit 'midnight' clearance of coal plant

**By Carla Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—Pro-environment groups and residents of Pulupandan town in Negros Occidental have denounced the "midnight environmental clearance" granted by former Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles to a proposed coal-fired power plant in the town.

The People of Pulupandan Against the Coal-Fired Power Plant (PPAC), Negrosanons Against the Coal-Fired Power Plant (NACPP), and Greenpeace Southeast Asia will ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to revoke the clearance, said Romana de los Reyes of the NACPP.

De los Reyes said they learned that Cerilles issued the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) for the project on Jan. 19, on the eve of the collapse of the Estrada administration.

Cerilles resigned on Jan. 24, three days after President Macapagal took office.

Ella Jacildo, coordinator of the PPAC, said the issuance of the ECC by Cerilles at the height of People Power II "betrays a culture of arrogance and deceit in the DENR where projects rejected by the people are railroaded just the same behind closed doors."

"We hope the new President will correct this," Jacildo said.

Then acting Environment Secretary Joemari Gerochi has given assurances that the ECC would be reviewed.

Facundo Yaneza Jr., president of Central Negros Power Corp., which will put up the plant, said they would fully cooperate with the review. He insisted that the CNPC went through "the whole environmental evaluation and permitting process" before its project was granted an ECC.

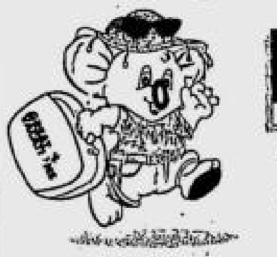
He also said it was "preposterous" to say that the ECC was granted in haste because it was signed by Cerilles on Dec. 28 and not on Jan. 19 as claimed by anti-coal plant advocates.

The CNPC is putting the plant at an estimated cost of $110 million on land owned by the family of Pulupandan Mayor Antonio Suatengco.

De los Reyes said the granting of the ECC contradicted with an existing certification from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that found the project site an environmentally critical area, being flood-prone with an unstable soil condition.

"Establishing the coal storage area and coal ash pond in this area will endanger the already limited water supply of the surrounding communities," she said.

The project's waste discharges could result in the destruction of Pulupandan's rich fishing area and in the process dislocate almost 1,000 fishing households.



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# Price fall killing Negros coco industry

DUMAGUETE CITY—The coconut industry here, if not in the entire country, is in peril due to a glut in vegetable oil in the world market.

The continuing glut in vegetable oil could make thousands of people dependent on the coconut industry suffer if the problem is not properly addressed.

Leoncio Paray, provincial manager of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) in Negros Oriental, told the INQUIRER that until the middle of last year, the buying price of *resecada* (dried copra with only 12 percent moisture) rose to P17 to P19 a kilo. But from August of the same year, the price went down rapidly. Currently, Paray said the price plummeted to between P5.60 to P5.80 a kilo.

Largely dictated by the law of supply and demand, world traders are getting only a small volume of coconut crude oil from the Philippines because of a large inventory of olive, palm, soybean, cottonseed and corn oil from other countries.

Paray said the poor quality of Philippine copra is also another factor in the fall of prices.

Last year, Paray said the province exported some 24,000 metric tons of crude coconut oil and 4,725 coconut expeller cake, which earned for the province some $10.2 million. Paray does not have yet the figure for 1999, but he said he was certain that there was a decrease by about 30 percent in revenue generated from the export of coconut products last year compared to 1999.

In Negros Oriental, there are about 27,000 small and big coconut farmers and 13,000 farm workers in the province's more than 50,000-hectare coconut plantations.

The PCA has yet to determine, however, how many of the farmers involved in the coconut industry are considered big and how many are small planters.

Paray said coconut farmers should accept the fact that coconut farming alone is not anymore feasible. To maximize the potential of their plantation, he said coconut farmers should improve the quality of their copra and their production process by using better coconut varieties.

Farmers were also advised to diversify into other crops.

He suggested that the farmers should now adopt the multi-crop farming system, go into planting of root crops, raise livestock and go into aquaculture.

Paray said under the "Maunlad na Niyugan" program, the PCA is mandated to help coconut farmers improve their lot and the industry in general.

He said the PCA will help the farmers in terms of technical know-how and provide assistance for them to be able to secure funding for their new ventures.

Currently, Paray said the PCA is in the thick of organizing the farmers into cooperatives in preparation for whatever endeavor they want to engage in.*Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

# Dagupan RP's most liquid city

DAGUPAN CITY—While the country faces a big budget deficit, Pangasinan's premier city is awash with cash and considered the country's most liquid city with no loans or encumbrances.

In his state-of-the-city address on Thursday, Mayor Alipio Fernandez Jr. said Dagupan has more than P147.98 million in surplus funds accumulated from 1992 to 2000.

National budget managers may learn a lesson or two from the city's strategic disbursement system where the city government has maintained an annual expenditure that is less than its yearly income.

This generated savings necessary for the liquidity and stability of the city government, said Fernandez, who has been mayor of this city since 1992.

He said over the last eight and a half years, the city has worked hard to strengthen its finances by introducing drastic reforms in its fiscal management system.

"We institutionalized a strategic disbursement system and implemented a scheme to increase revenue collection efficiency. From a measly P74.75 million income in 1992, we generated P124.84 million the following year, posting a P50-million increase in barely a year," he said.

The budget was augmented by payment for business licenses from which the city derived P42.45 million; and P14.77 million in various fees such as building permits in 2000.

"We just had visions. Today we have results," Fernandez said.

At the end of last year, he said the city government has completed 644 infrastructure projects worth P266.56 million, including the People's Astrodome, Senior Citizens' Center, police headquarters, city museum, city jail and 17 gymnasiums.

*Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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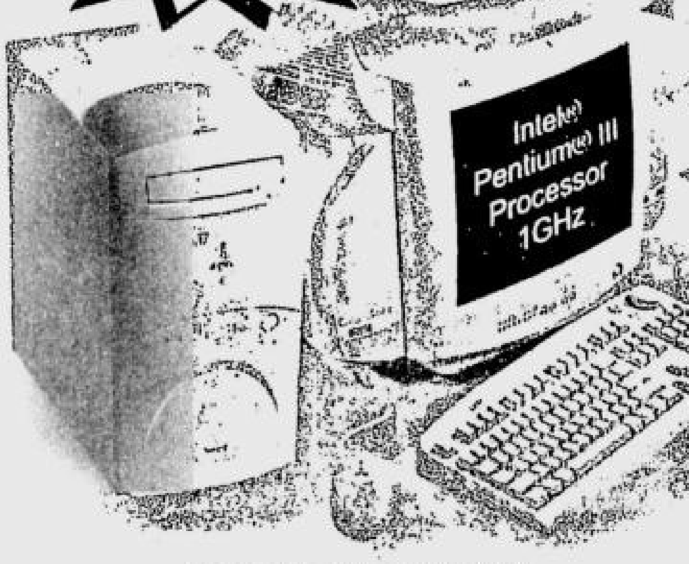

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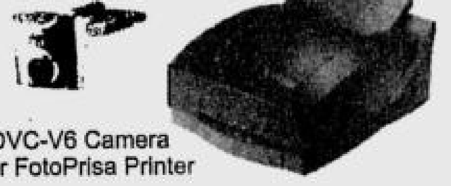

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# Chavit aide starts life without fear

**By L. Balbin Jr.**
*PDI N. Luzon Bureau*

VIGAN, Ilocos Sur—He is considered as one of the unsung heroes in the ouster of President Joseph Estrada because he secured the life of whistle-blower Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Chief Insp. Roque Verzosa Jr., 43, Singson's top security officer, said he is now picking up the pieces of his life after gambling everything–the safety of his family, his career and his life.

"We played against death for three months," Verzosa told the INQUIRER.

His deadly game, however, did not end there. As he tried to live a normal life after Estrada's ouster, he said he wanted to try another fight.

He confirmed that he was running for the mayoral post of this town in the May 14 elections.

Verzosa, a native of this town, related how his wife went hysterical when he decided to protect Singson's life at the height of the juetengate scandal.

He said even his family members were forced to stay in a parish convent for a month, leaving his children no other recourse but to skip their classes.

He said he shared a room with Singson in a safehouse somewhere in Los Baños, Laguna.

At one time, armed men closely monitored their movements, he said.

When Singson was invited for a speaking engagement in Davao City, Verzosa was asked to lead the advance party.

Instead of directly flying to Davao, Verzosa took a plane to Cebu. Upon reaching Cebu City, he received intelligence reports that there were men tracking them and were plotting to kill them.

He said they were able to confirm that their would-be assassins were already in Davao. Immediately, he and his team went back to Manila and recommended the cancellation of Singson's Davao appointment.

Verzosa said he resigned from the police service on Oct. 10 after top police officials here harassed him.

His papers, however, were not processed, he said, adding that a top police official encircled his picture with red ink.

"I interpreted it as (a sign that) they wanted to put me down," Verzosa said.

He said he felt that his associates and friends from the Philippine National Police were afraid to cooperate with him for fear of reprisals.

"When I went to their offices to gather intelligence reports, they approached me immediately and begged not to go out of my car, and leave," he said. "Whenever I called them, they put off their cellular phones right away and changed their numbers."

Singson came out in the open with his Juetengate exposé shortly after a group of policemen, some of them in civilian clothes, apprehended him in Malate, Manila for an alleged traffic violation.

Singson said he felt at that time that the men, all carrying assault rifles, were out to assassinate him after President Estrada learned of his plan to come out in the open with his exposé.

Singson said he refused to get out of his vehicle, a heavily armored van, for fear that he would be killed once he steps out.

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SUMMER PREVIEW

Hot summer days are drawing near and fiestas everywhere are a precursor to it. One of the areas that recently celebrated its feast was San Fernando City, dubbed the "Botanical Garden City of the North." Children wearing headgear that resemble flowers marched on the city's streets Feb. 9.

### DOTC PRIORITY

# Full operation of Clark assured

ANGELES CITY—Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez gave assurances on Saturday that he would prioritize the operation of the Clark International Airport for regular domestic flights.

He made the assurance during a meeting with the leaders of the Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement (PGKM) and the four Pampanga congressmen at the Royal Garden Estate here.

Alvarez arranged the meeting with PGKM chair Ruperto Cruz following reports that the group would ask for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo if she failed to operate the CIA within her first 100 days in office.

Cruz, also chair of the Citizens Council for Trade and Tourism and convenor of the Resign Estrada Movement of Pampanga, earlier warned that he would rally Ms Macapagal's *cabalens* (province-mates) to stage mass actions for the operation of the CIA and to call for her resignation.

Alvarez sought the assistance of Pampanga Representatives Francis Nepomuceno, Zenaida Ducut, Oscar Rodriguez and Juan Pablo Bondoc in meeting with PGKM leaders and other CIA stakeholders.

He said he would ask domestic airline companies like the Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific, and Air Philippines to use the CIA as one of their regular destinations.

He said support facilities like the North Rail Transit and the road projects connecting Clark to Manila would be pushed through by the DOTC to complement the operation of the CIA.

Alvarez also denied newspaper reports (not in the INQUIRER) that he has a stake in the Ninoy Aquino Airport Terminal 3 project.

The Naia 3 project is undertaken under the national government's contract with the Philippine Air Terminals Corp. (Piatco) which was seen by the PGKM and Move Clark Now as the main obstacles to the full operation of the CIA.

The Piatco deal, signed by former President Fidel Ramos in 1997, states that no other airport in the country would be allowed to build a new terminal until Naia 3 has served 10 million passengers within three years.

Bondoc said he and the other Pampanga congressmen would seek an audience with Ms Macapagal to get her support for the operation of the CIA.

Cruz, on the other hand, said his group would support Alvarez's plans for the CIA.

The Clark facilities, including the airport, were abandoned by American troops following the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991.

Although some of the buildings in the former US air base were destroyed or suffered damages during the eruption, the complex's airport facilities, including its runways, are among the best in the country.

Its runways were being used by huge planes of the American forces like C-130s and were believed maintained according to international standards.

Clark also suffered from massive looting following the departure of American soldiers.

Lobbyists for the regular operation of the CIA argued that the entry of regular flights into the airport could spur progress not only in Pampanga but also in the entire Central Luzon.

During the Americans' stay in Clark, areas surrounding the base became havens of prostitution that catered to American soldiers and thrived on the soldiers' patronage.

*Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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# NGOs planning lobby vs Gordon

TACLOBAN CITY—Leaders of non-government organizations fighting child prostitution in the country would oppose the appointment of Richard Gordon as tourism secretary.

Lea Orbidillo-Ortega, executive director of the group End Child Prostitution and Child Trafficking (Ecpat), told the INQUIRER that they object to Gordon's appointment because it was during his chairmanship of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority when child prostitution flourished in Olongapo City and in Subic.

"His appointment was really a shock to us. We were really surprised. Of all the people why him?" said Ortega, who also chairs a group created by different NGOs that focuses on child prostitution in the country.

Aside from Ecpat, Ortega said the other NGOs that oppose the designation of Gordon as tourism secretary were the International Catholic Child Bureau, Kabalikat, Lunduyan and Center for the Protection of Child Sexual Abuse.

Ecpat and these other NGOs have started drafting a statement addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to express their apprehension over Gordon's appointment, Ortega said.

If the President would not listen to their appeal, they will raise their opposition before members of the Committee on Appointment once Gordon's name is submitted to the CA for confirmation, she said.

"We will lobby against (Gordon's) appointment. He will have a hard time," Ortega vowed. *Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

# Morato back as 'alternative' candidate

(From page A1)

solution.

"The time has come to correct past mistakes. They should not be repeated," Morato said yesterday, without naming names.

This afternoon, he is set to file his certificate of candidacy for senator in the May elections—his "way of continuing the crusade for a better governance."

Sounds familiar? In the 1998 general elections, Morato ran for president—and lost badly—on a platform that chiefly consisted of criticizing rival Joseph Estrada.

Morato publicly apologized and tearfully made up with Estrada later during the latter's presidency.

Once again, Morato is "offer(ing) myself as an alternative candidate," this time to senators "our people may not want to elect again."

Asked if he was referring to the notorious "No" senators who are running for reelection, Morato said his "lips are sealed for now."

But "people know who they are," said the business executive, who prefers to be called a "social worker."

In 1998, his "ammunition" against Estrada included an hour-and-a-half of video footage showing the then Vice President gambling with his friend, Charlie "Atong" Ang, at the Casino Filipino.

Will Morato use another set of "secret weapons" against his most bitter rivals, like reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago?

"No comment *muna*," Morato pleaded in a phone interview, although he hinted that he had aces up his sleeves.

In 1994, Morato filed an impeachment case against Estrada.

"I started it all, remember? (Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis) 'Chavit' Singson just finished it," Morato said, without mentioning his gushy public reconciliation with Estrada at the peak of the former president's popularity.

At the time, Morato apologized, cried, talked about his mother and Estrada's mother, and praised Estrada as an all-around swell kind of guy.

Yesterday, Morato, son of the late Tomas Morato, first mayor of Quezon City and first Quezon congressman, pointed out he had "fought many battles in the past—alone and in the name of public service."

"History will prove that my battles have been (against) the powerful and the high and mighty," he said.

Morato, who also lost as a Lakas-NUCD senatorial candidate in 1992, stressed the "need to conscienticize the voting public into making the right choices this coming May."

"In times like these, I cannot myself be a bystander. If I win, it would be a big sacrifice on my part for public service is truly a punishing experience.

"But should I lose, I'll probably be the happiest person for that will guarantee me a life of peace and comfort," he added.

Until, perhaps, he decides to run again.

Morato isn't the only person who is running in the hope of drawing votes away from supposedly "undesirable" candidates.

Activist Nathanael "Nat" Santiago recently announced that he would run for councilor in Caloocan City if only to prevent Estrada's close friends, Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio and his older brother Macario, from regaining power in local politics.

Santiago will run as a guest candidate of Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo, a fierce rival of the Asistios.

Santiago, secretary general of the party-list group Bayan Muna, advised voters to junk the senatorial bids of former Press Secretary Ricardo "Dong" Puno, former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, ex-Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson, and reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan and Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

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# Senate race . . .

(From page A1)

for Nos. 9 and 10, and staunch Estrada allies Edgardo Angara and Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago tied for 11th and 12th.

Former Speaker Manuel Villar and Rep. Ralph Recto, both prospective candidates of the PPC, are both in Nos. 13 and 14.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the results of the survey, which was presented during a meeting of coalition partners with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Thursday.

### Last day of filing

Ms Macapagal will announce the 13-person senatorial slate of the PPC today, the last day of filing of certificates of candidacies for those aspiring for a Senate seat.

Senate hopefuls have until midnight today to file their candidacies with the Commission on Elections.

In the SWS survey, Estrada's press secretary, Ricardo "Dong" Puno, was No. 15, followed by former Cebu Gov. Lito Osmeña and Executive Secretary Renato de Villa, Nos. 16 and 17.

Former Ambassador to the United States Ernesto Maceda and former Speaker Jose de Venecia were tied at Nos. 18 and 19; Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, No. 20; and Rep. Heherson Alvarez, No. 21.

Osmeña and Alvarez are included in the PPC shortlist of candidates.

Magsaysay, Drilon, Arroyo, Flavier and Pangilinan are from the PPC, while Mercado, Honasan, Enrile, Angara and Santiago are from the opposition, either from the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino or the Partido ng Masang Pilipino.

Osmeña last week took his oath as member of the PDP-Laban, headed by Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.; who said his party would take an independent stance.

Some members of the PPC want Osmeña included in the slate. But the senator, while "not anti-administration," is reportedly not inclined to join the PPC slate because his estranged cousin Lito Osmeña is a coalition member and is opposing his inclusion.

### Kompil objection

The most vehement objections were reportedly raised against De Castro's inclusion in the PPC slate because the broadcaster was said to be "pro-Erap."

Coalition sources said Ms Macapagal and former President Fidel Ramos are batting for De Castro because his inclusion would make for a stronger ticket.

A PPC source said Kompil 2 members of civil society, who are now represented in the Macapagal administration, warned in a meeting Thursday at the house of Ms Macapagal's parents in Forbes Park that De Castro was on its "negative list" of candidates they would campaign against.

The list includes "pro-Estrada" candidates like Santiago, Enrile and Honasan.

### PPC shortlist

A PPC member said the 17 names "pre-selected" by the various parties in the coalition and presented during the Thursday meeting were Magsaysay, Drilon, Flavier, Arroyo, Herrera, Alvarez, Tañada, Pangilinan, Recto, former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan, Villar, Apostol, economist Solita Monsod, Santanina Rasul, Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, Yasay and Rep. Roilo Golez.

But eight are said to be uncertain of making it to the slate because of certain problems, chiefly their poor showing in surveys.

While coalition sources said Pangilinan "may be" included because of his relatively high ranking, there is a problem because the Liberal Party is entitled to only one slot. Tañada, a House prosecutor, is also in the slate.

Pagdanganan, who lost in the 1998 senatorial elections, is in the 26th-27th slots together with Yasay; Rasul is in 29-31; Monsod is in 32-34; and Chato is at the bottom of the list at 41-42.

Because of so many candidates, the PPC failed to finalize the slate. After meeting for more than an hour, the parties in the coalition decided to let the President choose.

"She is having a hard time deciding who are on the lineup and who are not," a Malacañang official yesterday said.

The official said the President was expected to come up with her list after a marathon meeting with political groups under the People Power Coalition.

The meeting started at noon yesterday and was expected to last until midnight.

After praying at a convent, Ms Macapagal was expected last night to choose the 13 administration candidates.

The President invited groups like Kompil 2 to her parent's residence in Forbes Park to get their comments on the 17 people in the coalition's shortlist.

"The President is sending a signal to her people that civil society is also part of the political configuration," Dan Siongco of Kompil 2 said.

Siongco said the President also met with Kompil 2 and other key sectors Saturday night during which members of the civil society again objected to the inclusion of De Castro in the slate.

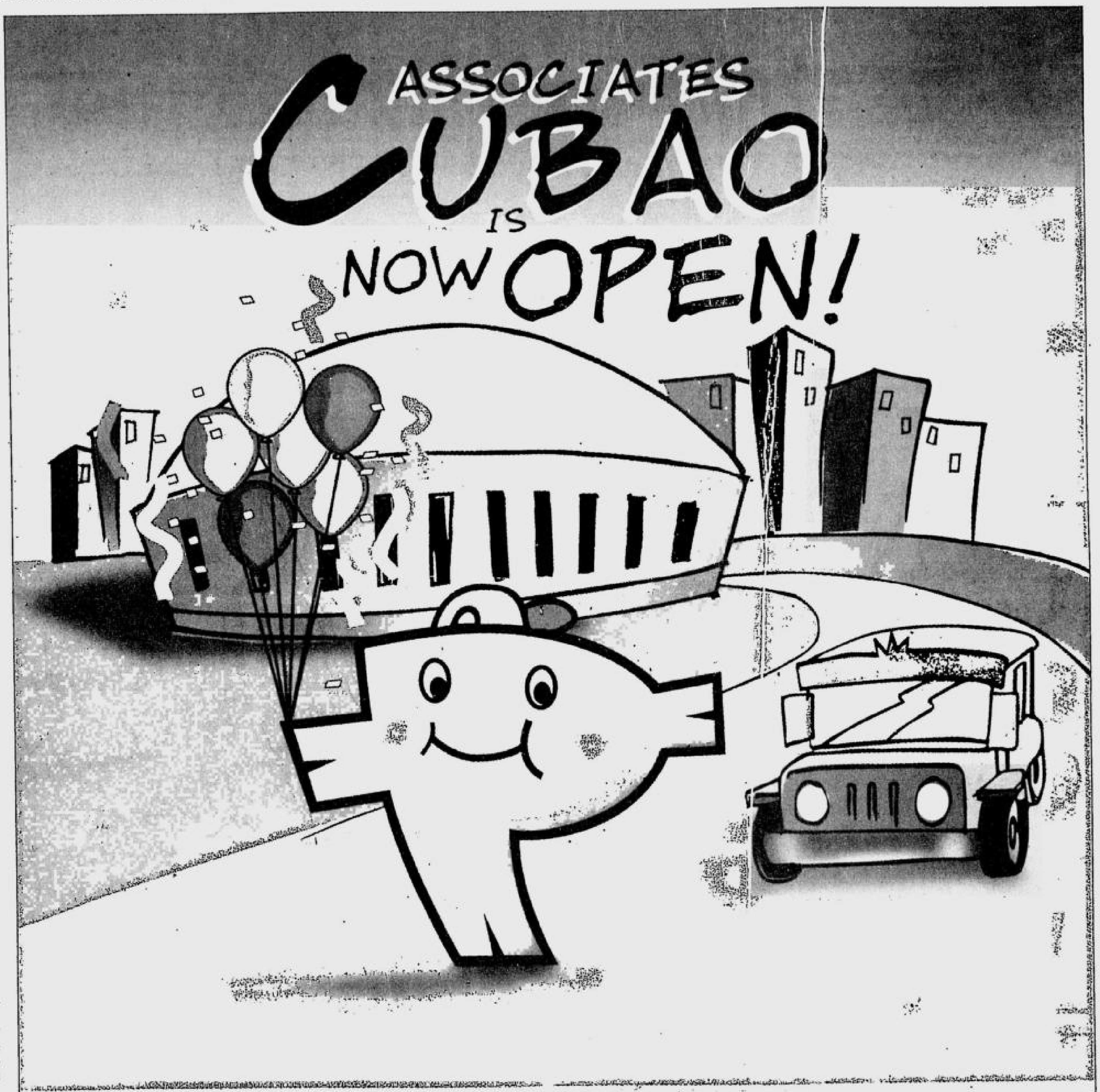
He said Kompil presented its criteria for choosing candidates: integrity, role in People Power II and their stand on issues.

Running priest Robert Reyes was also in the consultation.

A party supportive of Ms Macapagal is fielding a Muslim as its lone candidate for the Senate.

The Philippine Democratic Socialist Party (PDSP) is fielding Prof. Moner Bajunaid, 50, former chancellor of the Mindanao State University and until August last year, head of the technical committee of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace panel.

He said the PDSP was focusing on his candidacy to stress the importance of Mindanao and the peace process. ***With reports from Gerald Lacuarta and Armand Nocum in Manila and Carolyn O. Arguillas,***



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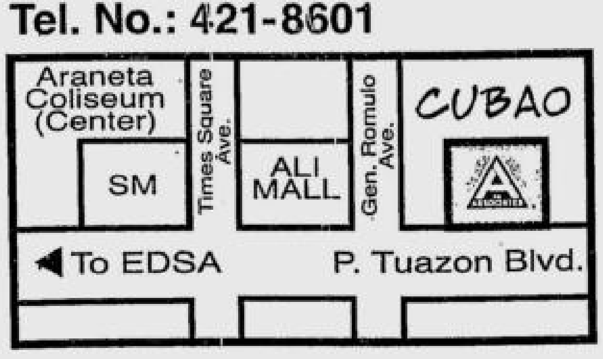

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# GMA, Erap governance: . . .

(From page A1)

speeches are more serious, although not very elegant. Dignity has returned to the language of the presidency.

Ms Macapagal is turning out quickly to be a communicator. She has used the presidency as a bully pulpit to articulate and explain her priorities. The emphasis of presidential messages has shifted to issues and programs, away from the highly personalistic and patronage-driven style of her predecessor.

While Estrada was charismatic and Macapagal is more structured, the former communicated through one-liners, bad jokes and coarse language.

In the end, the Estrada presidency lost the bully pulpit as a platform to communicate ideas and build a national consensus. used it as a medium to engage his many self-created "enemies" in "all-out wars." Under him, the country was in a permanent state of siege.

One of the first things she did was to hijack the pro-poor issue from Estrada. In her inauguration speech, her first priority was to fight poverty.

She followed this up quickly with a visit to the slum areas, saying she was not offering "xerox" land titles but programs to lift them from poverty.

We have yet to see concrete programs, but the thrust has been made toward seizing Estrada's core constituency—the urban poor—and transferring their support to her.

The poor are giving her a chance. She has to deliver some results before 2004. If she can't, they will not only take their revenge on her. They will shift their support to another demagogue.

## Armed Forces

Ms Macapagal has moved swiftly to consolidate her support in the Armed Forces. She has visited military camps, wounded soldiers in hospitals and has reviewed the troops.

She needs to maintain the loyalty of the Armed Forces in the face of legal challenges inspired by the Estrada loyalists over her takeover of power.

They are questioning her legitimacy. Coup rumors are exaggerated. The military is more solid and unified today than it was during the Aquino administration that was disrupted by seven coup attempts.

During the Aquino years, the military was so riven by factions that it was virtually in a state of civil war.

Ms Macapagal took office with a more clear-cut and institutionally supported legitimacy than then President Corazon Aquino.

Her problem is how to enhance her legitimacy and to maintain the consensus of institutional and NGO support that enabled her to take power through the constitutional succession route.

## Mindanao

Ms Macapagal has reversed the confrontational approach of Estrada in Mindanao and against other rebel groups—notably the communist-led National Democratic Front.

She has launched a policy of attraction toward the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and has established a climate for a ceasefire and resumption of negotiations.

Estrada's priority on Mindanao was about war. Ms Macapagal's priority on Mindanao is not only reversing the war policy but also wider in scope—integrating Mindanao, a long neglected region, into the national agenda and central decision-making process.

The appointment of Sen. Teofisto Guingona Jr. as Vice President and two other Mindanao leaders to the Cabinet, including a Muslim (Rep. Simeon Datumanong), demonstrate the Mindanao accent.

The restoration of peace in Mindanao sets the stage for economic reconstruction. At least, it will be an incentive to the donor countries of ODA (Official Development Assistance) to unfreeze funds for projects in Mindanao.

These were frozen because of the unsettled peace and order on the island and because of lack of confidence in the Estrada administration.

## Business

Ms Macapagal has established dialogues with the business community that had been alienated by Estrada. The community is euphoric. The polls show a return of confidence in government.

The President's trust rating has risen dramatically, moving her out of her negative ratings before she took over the presidency.

The stock market index has gone up and the peso value has appreciated to 47 to the dollar (compared to 56 during the crisis), and has stabilized on the 47-49 band during the past two weeks.

The confidence atmosphere offers a good start for recovery, but even the government's economic managers, including Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, do not expect dramatic leaps in the improvement of the economy. They expect a take-off after two years.

## Appointments

The Cabinet appointments were marred by the controversy over retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia as national security adviser. Ms Macapagal gave way to criticism and shelved Abadia.

Despite the criticism, the military, ex-President Fidel Ramos and other political supporters had received political rewards in Cabinet appointments.

Individually, the Cabinet members are competent and can function as a team—a very important criterion for the President. Some appointees, especially those recruited from Congress, are inexperienced in administration but they can grow with the job.

This is a probationary Cabinet. Its composition is likely to change, depending upon the results of the May elections, which should be the big test of the mandate and legitimacy of the new government.

## Biggest issue

The biggest issue facing Ms Macapagal is whether Estrada would be given leniency and allowed to leave the country.

The justice department has built up a number of criminal cases, including graft and plunder, against Estrada and his cronies.

It is also pressing tax evasion cases against Lucio Tan and other Estrada cronies, partly to boost revenue collection but mainly to show that the new government is serious about ending corruption and cronyism.

A large constituency of the Edsa II coalition is vehemently opposed to leniency toward Estrada and his cronies. If the President goes soft on Estrada, she will not only lose this constituency but will also spark disillusionment over Edsa II and its capacity to achieve reconciliation with justice.

Her administration has to show it can send Estrada and cronies to jail. Estrada is running scared; his liberty hangs on the slender thread of his legal challenge in the Supreme Court, in which his lawyers have argued that he has immunity from criminal charges because he is still the legal president.

That's why he wants to go abroad on the pretext of seeking medical treatment. This excuse is a graceful way out, but it would cause a major rebellion against this government from the ranks of disenchanted constituencies.

Keeping Estrada here and prosecuting him could cause unrest among his die-hard constituents among the poor. But unrest from this sector is a lesser risk than that posed by failure to prosecute successfully.

Such a failure could lead to an early collapse of her coalition and even destroy her chances of winning election in her own right. Although most Filipinos are giving her a chance, she is under watch over her determination to crack down on corruption and to establish a level playing field in business.

At the moment, Ms Macapagal enjoys the advantages and legitimacy of incumbency. She must not squander these. She can easily lose these in two years.

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# Just call her Vicky, the Firefly Lady

(From page A1)

"I told myself, 'I know why I'm here and it is to help President (Macapagal-Arroyo) make the right decisions so she can do what's best for the country. I'll do what I have to do, say what I have to say and if people don't like it, then that's their problem. I don't care.'"

Garchitorena "has that rare quality of being able to combine corporate concerns with a social conscience," said Berry Marfori, who worked for Garchitorena for six years at Ayala Corp.

"She has this great ability to transform herself and becomes credible in whatever field she goes into—from science to corporate world to civil society, and now government," Marfori added.

## Overachiever?

This is actually Garchitorena's second stint in government. In 1964, fresh out of college, she worked as a researcher at the Philippine Atomic Research Center.

Unknown to many, she graduated summa cum laude with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Physics from the College of the Holy Spirit. She was also an SGV scholar at the Asian Institute of Management.

She is used to being an overachiever.

Until her appointment to the PMS, she was president of the Ayala Foundation, managing director of corporate affairs at Ayala Corp. and columnist for Business World.

She was a commissioner in the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women in 1986, executive director of the Museo ng Malacañang Foundation, and chair and president of the Meralco Foundation.

She has also been active in a long list of other NGOs, among them the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, the Civicus World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the ABS-CBN Foundation, and the women's group Aware. She is also a convenor of Kompil II.

"Her integrity precedes her," Atacador said.

## Ayala connection

Asked about the "Ayala connection" in terms of her appointment to the PMS, Garchitorena said: "I don't see what the issue is. I had to be working somewhere."

Before she decided to take on the job at the PMS, she first consulted her family (she has five grown-up children, among them stage actor Jaime, her eldest), her "bosses in Ayala" and all her other organizations.

Initially, she asked for a six-month leave but was told that this was not possible.

"Finally, I decided to accept the challenge because I think that we worked very hard to get Erap out, and then to put a new government in. And President (Macapagal) upholds the same ideas and values that I do. Maybe I can help her make sure that (her promises are fulfilled)," Garchitorena said in one of two recent interviews with the INQUIRER.

But she plans to stay only until 2004.

"After that, I go back to the private sector because by then I'm sure other people can be tapped already to come in and do the work," she explained.

## Proposal

Ms Macapagal offered Garchitorena the PMS job at 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 20, just three hours after she took her oath as President.

She sprang the question after lunch. Garchitorena told her that "I can still help in the private sector."

But the President was persistent. She and her staff even wanted Garchitorena to join them at a flag-raising ceremony in Malacañang the next Monday morning.

In October, Ms Macapagal had offered her the position of secretary of social welfare in the event of a Macapagal administration. Garchitorena declined but recommended Corazon "Dinky" Soliman for the job.

## Sign

Accepting the PMS post was a very critical decision, so she asked for a sign.

"Over the weekend, I prayed. I could not sleep. I prayed, read the Bible, and then finally asked for a sign. And, well, the sign was given to me so I had to move," she said.

Asked what the sign was, the new PMS chief just laughed and said: "Secret *ko na yun*."

Garchitorena accepted the offer the Monday after she was asked.

Since she arrived at the PMS with only her secretary in tow, she has not talked to any of her predecessors, including Macel Fernandez and De Jesus.

In fact, there has still not been any formal turnover ceremony.

Garchitorena just asked the existing staff and personnel to brief her on how the agency works.

## On Gloria

She has not really worked closely with Ms Macapagal before, although she knew her since the latter was then a trade undersecretary and Garchitorena was the chair of a counterpart NGO of the Department of Trade.

But Garchitorena has found that working closely with the President is easy.

"Because of my position here, I've worked very closely with her. And so far, I like what I see. She's very hardworking. She's demanding, which is good. She demands excellence, which is good," she said.

"She doesn't waste time, she tells it like it is. And that's the kind of person I am, too. So I think it will be very easy keeping pace with her," she added.

## Extra careful

Unlike De Jesus, who had a turf war with former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora, Garchitorena said she has a good working relationship with Executive Secretary Renato de Villa, even though the two are still working on delineating their functions.

In her first few days in Malacañang, she told her staff that she would continue the good practices introduced by her predecessors while making sure that corruption would have no place in the government.

"We have to be extra careful. I told them very clearly, we now have a good beginning. Whatever happened in the past, there should be no more corruption," she said.

## Epiphany

For a woman used to success, Garchitorena can handle failure remarkably well, Marfori said, describing her former boss as "ever the optimist who sees the glass as half-full."

Atacador confirmed that "when she lost her congressional bid in San Juan in 1987, her reaction was, 'Well, it's not meant for me. And then she moved on.'"

Well, not quite. As the PMS chief herself declared of her failed political bid, "it was a great experience that turned my life around. I felt like St. Paul having an epiphany."

Garchitorena had her first taste of politics right out of college when she volunteered to work in the 1965 presidential campaign of Sen. Raul Manglapus.

After the Edsa revolt of 1986, she "ran for Cory (Aquino)" and lost. "But it was an eye-opener," she said, recalling how during the campaign, she saw poverty up close, "morning, noon and night."

One image hit her particularly hard. "There was this dead baby just lying there on the table because the parents had no money for a coffin, an *entresuelo* so low you had to crawl in on all fours, and a one-room shack that had no windows so I couldn't see beyond my nose even though it was noon.

"And to think it was right in my backyard, cheek by jowl with Greenhills and Wack Wack," said Garchitorena, who comes from the well-off Pineda clan of Nueva Ecija.

After she lost, she used the leftover campaign money to set up Buhay Foundation, which sponsored livelihood projects for the community.

"I couldn't pretend that I didn't see what I saw," she said. "So I gathered my friends in our garage and decided we had to do something, teach the women knitting and how to do Christmas decor and handicraft, and so on."

The group later turned over the foundation's assets and capital to the community.

Garchitorena describes herself, after more than 30 years in the private sector, as "still an activist at heart."

"I'm still an advocate," she said, "except that now I'm within the system."

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# Erap advised to have eye treatment here

(From page A1)

'ily be treated in the country.

In a telephone interview, Perez said "there is no reason" for Estrada to leave the country.

He said he would not lift Estrada's hold-departure order because the treatment can be done in the country.

Perez said he had consulted the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology and the Philippine Society of Glaucoma and was told that the type of operation that Estrada needed could very well be done here.

"The kind of operation he needs requires the use of laser, and laser is available even in Batangas," said Perez, a former congressman who represented that province.

He noted that Filipino doctors capable of doing such an operation had undergone training in Europe and the United States.

## Imelda's eye doctor

He also revealed that Dr. Felipe Tolentino, a US-based doctor who treated former first lady Imelda Marcos for a similar eye problem, had recently flown into the country.

"Maybe, he can secure the services of Imelda's doctor," Perez advised Estrada.

If Estrada sued him for not lifting the hold-departure order, Perez said he would just point out the availability of glaucoma treatment in the country.

Instead of debating on whether to allow Estrada to leave, the Macapagal administration should send him to jail, the militant women's group Gabriela said.

"If the President will not show any political will in prosecuting and jailing Estrada, we have no option but to go back to the streets and denounce this new government," said Lyda Canson, chair of Gabriela's chapter in Davao City.

Canson said humanitarian consideration was not applicable in Estrada's case because his eye problem was not a matter of life and death.

"Besides, eye doctors in the country are among the best in Asia," Canson said.

Camarines Sur Rep. James Jacob said the delay in the prosecution of Estrada on plunder charges and his possible departure for medical treatment pointed to a possible "tradeoff" that the Macapagal administration had not revealed to the public.

Jacob said the Macapagal administration was "fishing for the most acceptable reason" to give to the public in letting him go.

"Humanitarian reason" is one of them, he said. ***With reports from Juan Escandor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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# 'Popoy' buried today . . .

(From page A1)

ready agreed to let them join the funeral march," Velasco said.

The workers belong to unions of big companies in Metro Manila like Fortune Tobacco, Republic Asahi Glass, Gelmart, Wrangler, Noritake and Manila Bay Spinning Mills.

Unions of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Philippine Airlines will also send delegations.

As a tribute to Lagman, Velasco said the Partido ng Manggagawa would hold its founding congress in the morning at the UP Bahay ng Alumni, in front of which the BMP chair was gunned down on Feb. 6 by four still unidentified assassins.

## Sack Wycoco calls

A militant fisherfolk group urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to recall the appointment of Reynaldo Wycoco as director of the National Bureau of Investigation for allegedly insinuating that BMP's rival groups in the Left were involved in Lagman's killing.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas made the appeal after Wycoco, a former police official, on Friday pointed at communist groups as the culprits, citing the ideological rift between Lagman and Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

"The strongest angle would be the rift between Joma and Ka Popoy. As of now, that is the most probable angle based on our assessment," Wycoco had told the INQUIRER, though he added that investigators had not ruled out the possible involvement of rightist groups.

Rodolfo Sambajon, Pamalakaya chair, said Wycoco's statements were irresponsible and malicious.

"Wycoco's selling point for his accusation lacks basis. It is plain rumor mongering and highly speculative," Sambajon said.

CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal has denied his group's involvement in the killing, saying "there was no urgent or grave reason" for the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, to go after Lagman.

Even BMP's Velasco cited a "small possibility" that Sison's group had a hand in the killing, saying Sison has only resorted to character assassination against Lagman.

Velasco said that even if another rival communist group, the Revolutionary Proletarian Party-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), was involved, the assailants could not be branded as "communists." Lagman used to command the ABB, an urban-based hit squad.

"These elements could be the ones who have already surrendered and are now being used by the military," Velasco said.

## Revenge angle

Sison has pointed at the "revenge angle" as the main motive in the assassination.

"For the benefit of serious investigators, I wish to point out a probable connection between the ongoing assassination plot against me and the killing of Popoy Lagman," Sison said in a statement e-mailed from his base in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

"Since the exposure of the assassination plot by Col. Reynaldo Berroya and then by me, the plotters, according to reliable sources of the NDF, have been extremely upset and angry about the leak of information from inside or from the periphery of the circle of plotters and operatives," he claimed.

"It is highly probable that the assassination plotters saw Popoy Lagman as the leak," he said.

"The killing of Lagman is probably a punitive action of the RPA-ABB against a suspected leak in the assassination plot against me, as well as a component of a larger scheme of pro-Estrada groups to sow bloody intrigue and destabilize the new administration," Sison said.

As a result, he said, "it is not at all surprising that, according to reports, the (sketches) in the hands of investigators resemble suspects in previous hit jobs of the RPA-ABB, which is notorious for its close connections with Estrada, Gen. Panfilo Lacson and Eduardo Cojuangco."

The CPP founder, however, clarified that "Lagman had nothing to do with the assassination plot as an active conspirator because he could not be in the same project with his bitter enemies, Nilo de la Cruz and Arturo Tabara."

Sison earlier claimed being the target of an assassination plot hatched by military and police authorities conspiring with former communist rebels. ***With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

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# Scientists unveil map of human genome

(From page A1)

else via the Internet.

"Now we have to learn to use it to understand the biology of the organism," said David Galas of the Keck Institute of Applied Lifes Science, in California.

Venter, chief executive of Celera Genomics of Rockville, Maryland, said the company had sequenced 99 percent of the human genome and "assembled" 3.2 billion letters of genetic code.

The project used DNA samples from five people, three women and two men, including an African-American, an Asian-Chinese, a Hispanic-Mexican and two Caucasians.

According to Venter, about 40 percent of our genes have unknown functions.

Knowing the human genetic makeup could lead to revolutionary preventative treatments and medicines tailored for each individual.

> Knowing the human genetic makeup could lead to revolutionary preventative treatments and medicines tailored for each individual

Parents, for instance, could test their children while still in the mother's womb for genetic defects.

Single-gene conditions such as Huntington's chorea are obvious candidates for testing, which will lead to "nightmare" dilemmas about whether such tests should be permitted by employers, lenders and health insurers, said Peter McGuffin, of the Institute of Psychiatry at Kings College in London.

## Major concern

It is the risk of discrimination in insurance and employment that concerns people most about the Human Genome Project, which has since 1990 worked to map the basic building blocks of man.

In a Gallup survey last year, 86 percent of those polled said doctors should have to ask permission before conducting genetic tests.

"One of the most difficult issues is determining the proper balance between privacy concerns and fair use of genetic information. Without adequate safeguards, the genetic revolution could mean one step forward for science and two steps backward for civil rights," US Senators James Jeffords and Thomas Daschle wrote in an article for Science magazine.

"Misuse of genetic information could create a new underclass: the genetically less fortunate," the lawmakers added.

In testimony last year to a Senate committee, Venter said: "There are more barriers to achieving the era (of personalized and preventive medicine) than the scientific ones that have now been overcome."

"A key barrier is the fear that is pervasive in our society that genetic information will be used to deny health insurance or a job," he added.

"Without the enactment of legislation, I fear that this new era will be delayed."

In the United States, 37 states have adopted legislation to prevent genetic discrimination by health insurers and 24 states have barred genetic discrimination in employment.

Former President Bill Clinton last year ordered protection for government employees from such discrimination, but the US Congress has so far resisted enacting that protection into law. *AFP*

# Book of life is smaller than expected

PARIS—What's the difference between man and a worm?

Genetically, maybe less than we thought.

That is the surprising—some would say rather grim—finding of scientists in their first detailed assessment of the human genome, the chemical code for making life that was cracked last June.

The draft of the human genetic blueprint turns out to contain several times fewer genes than most experts had ever expected.

Researchers have found that humans have only around 30,000 genes, about 10,000 more than the nematode worm and 20,000 more than a fruit fly, two laboratory models whose genomes are already well known.

The experts put forward this figure in studies due to be unveiled Monday in the prestigious weekly journals Science and Nature.

That discovery raises sensational questions about what are the genes that have made Homo sapiens the dominant species on this planet. And it also prompts sudden thinking about how such a relatively tiny number of genes can operate something so awesomely complex as a body.

"Think about how such a small number of genes can generate a fly or a person," said Barbara Jasny, a senior editor at Science.

Genes are DNA sequences that control proteins, the machinery that comprises, builds and operates all of the body's cells.

By understanding how genes work, we can find potential ways of blocking or preventing disease and enormously extending the human life span.

Craig Venter, the maverick scientist and entrepreneur who fought with a public sector consortium in a race to be first to publish the draft, says that even if the number of genes is far fewer than thought, many of them are unexplored territory.

"About 40 percent of our genes have unknown functions," Venter points out.

Vast sections of the genome are almost like a desert—long stretches of DNA where there are no genes at all. Then genes appear in clusters, like "islands," in the words of one researcher.

These lengthy strands of non-gene DNA have sometimes been written off as "junk," a possible legacy of evolution. But as the study of the genome progresses, they are bound to attract close attention to ascertain whether they have a role.

The next challenge is to see how genes work, both individually and together, French researcher Jean-Michel Claverie told Agence France Presse.

"The complexity of the human organism cannot be explained by the higher number of genes," he said.

"The biggest difference between humans and worms or flies is the complexity of our proteins," said David Baltimore, of the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena.

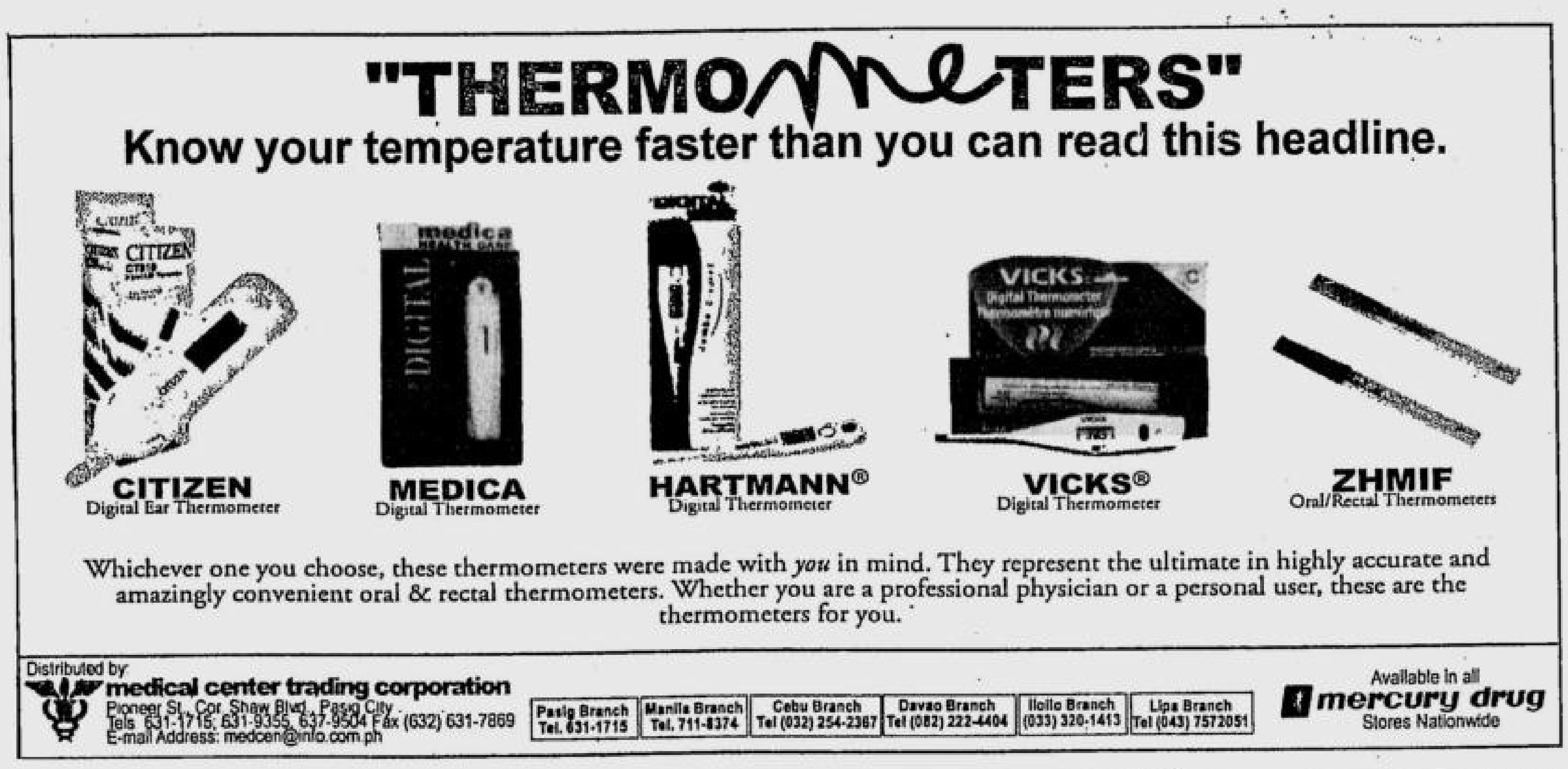
Already a new and potentially lucrative discipline has sprung up, "proteomics," the study of proteins that could have therapeutic uses.

The other new frontier is the study of single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), known as "snips" to the gene-wise.

These are tiny variations in genes that may cause susceptibility to an array of hundreds of inherited diseases, such as cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, obesity, asthma and so on.

Venter's team has already identified more than 2 million "snips," a first step toward creating diagnostic tools that doctors can use to advise patients that they run a risk of developing an ailment and should adjust their lifestyle accordingly.

These indicators could also eventually help develop "personalized" medicine—treatment that is tailor-made to an individual's genetic profile to ensure that it be effective and will not trigger side-effects. *AFP*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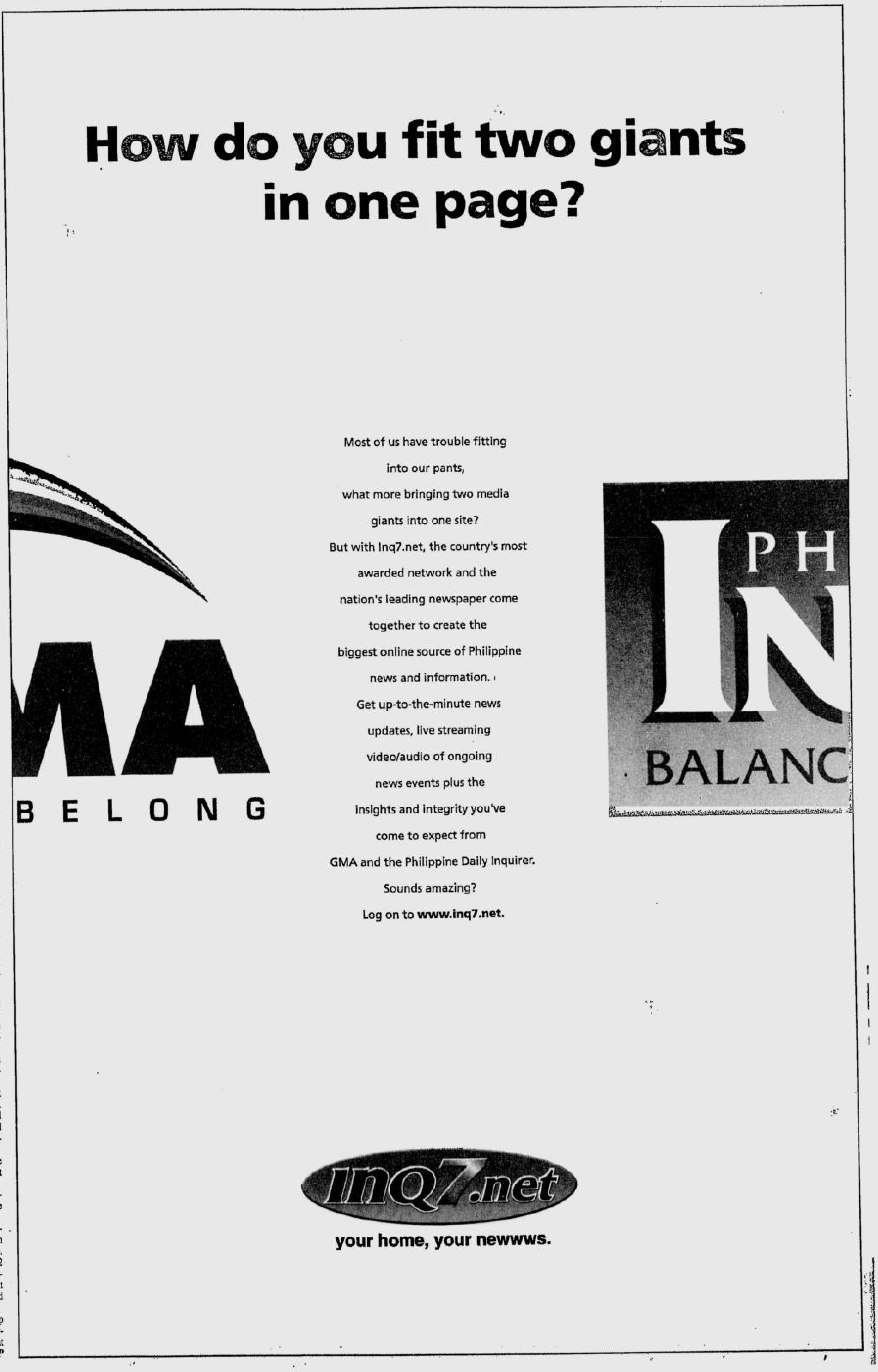
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# Selection

NBA NOTES

*Henry Liao*

IT'S high time the NBA modifies the two-part selection scheme it has been employing for the All-Star Game over the past quarter of a century.

Fans around the league—and around the globe starting 1996—have been voting for the starters since 1975. The remaining players on the 12-man East and West rosters are chosen by the head coaches in their respective conferences. They are required to pick two forwards, one center and two guards, plus two more who can be at any position, in each ballot in picking the seven reserves in their respective conferences.

The idea of having fans select the starters in the All-Star Game was born out of the concept of enabling the public, the paying customer to be precise, to feel a personal involvement in the annual undertaking.

The All-Star Game belongs to the fans of the NBA, it is said.

Ideally, the All-Star starters must represent the best fives in each conference. Unfortunately, this has not always been so, now and in the past. .

A lot of times, the fans' judgment has been questioned. The fans tend to cast their vote emotionally instead of on performance. There are the popular votes and the sentimental votes, or ballots turned in for their favorite players based on past performances and not on current play.

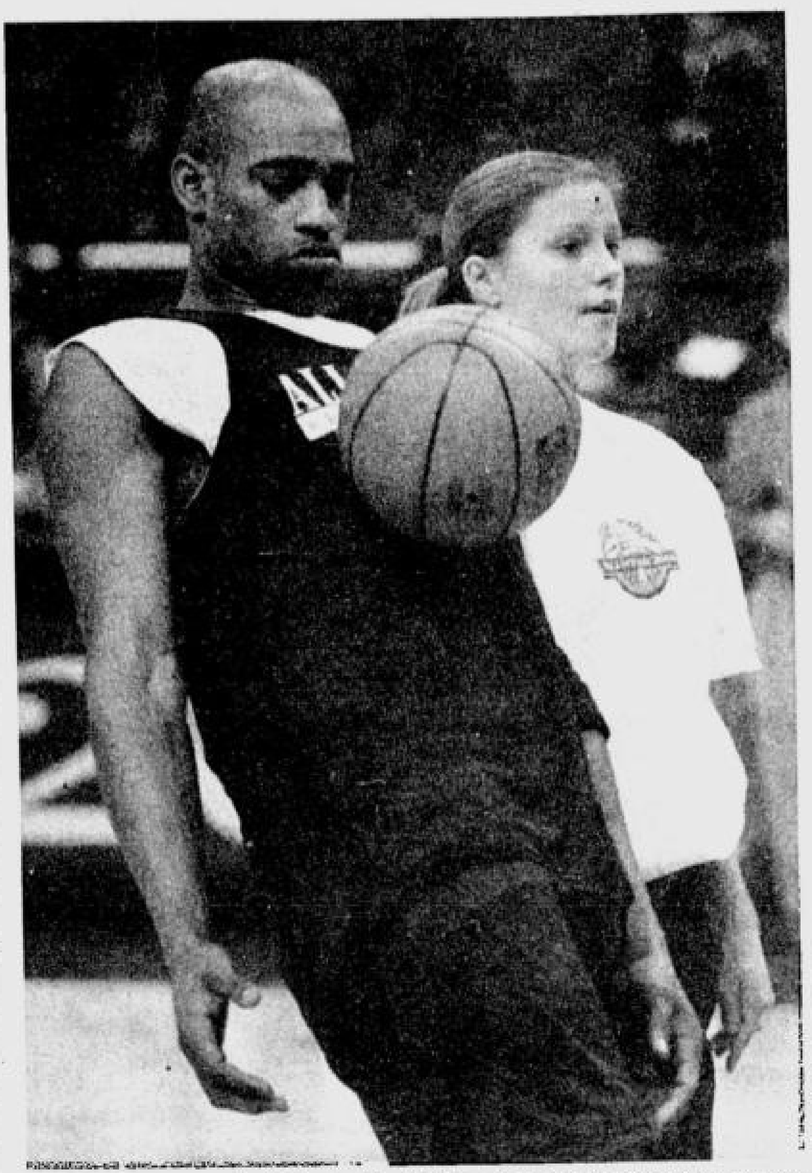
This year, a couple of players were chosen by the fans to the East starting lineup—Miami center Alonzo Mourning and Orlando forward Grant Hill—even though their non-participation due to health woes had earlier been established.

There were suggestions that the players themselves should be the ones doing the selection of the All-Star starters to prevent the stuffing of ballot boxes by the fans.

Or the task should be given to the sportswriters and broadcasters in NBA cities who have been covering the games on a regular basis.

# Sonics rookie tops slam dunk

## Szczerbiak shines as sophomores subdue rookies, 121-113



**VINCE** Carter controls the ball with his chest during the East team's practice Saturday. AP

WASHINGTON—Desmond Mason likes to draw and paint. And now he's a slam dunk artist.

The Seattle SuperSonics rookie won the NBA slam dunk contest Saturday night, beating 19-year-old DeShawn Stevenson of Utah and Charlotte's Baron Davis in the final round.

"You've got to be more creative now, and that's what I tried to do," said Mason. "That's what all the guys tried to do,,you could see it.

I think everybody was nervous. It wasn't the strongest dunk contest ever. But it was fun doing it," he said.

Mason, the oldest competitor in the field of young leapers at age 23, had a soaring left-handed dunk on his first try of the final round to get a 45 out of a possible 50. Then he received a 44 with a two-handed cradle on a drive from the right side for a final-round 89.

Stevenson, who won a high school dunk contest last year before going right to the NBA, finished with a final-round 85 and Davis a 77.

Knowing he needed a big score to win, Davis tried to dunk with his headband covering his eyes on his final attempt but didn't hit the rim and managed just a 33. Had he made it, it may have brought the only perfect 50 of the night.

"I guess you could say it's a bad day for headbands," said Davis.

Not making the final round were Corey Maggette, Stromile Swift and Jonathan Bender.

Defending champion Vince Carter, who had three perfect scores last year, didn't compete because of a sore knee.

That left a field of neophtyes who had never been in the contest, and three of the participants were rookies.

Mason, who's dabbled in art since he was 15, attended Oklahoma State and recently attended a memorial service for the basketball players and staff killed in a plane crash.

The judges were Julius Erving, David Thompson, Nate Archibald, Danny Ainge and Kenny Smith. A maximum of 10 points can be assigned to each dunk by each judge.

Meanwhile, Wally Szczerbiak had a bloody good time Saturday, leaving the floor with a gash under his right eye and the Most Valuable Player award in the Rookie Challenge.

Szczerbiak of the Minnesota Timberwolves scored 27 points to lead a team of second-year NBA players past a rookie squad, 121-113, in a fast-paced, above-the-rim game featuring slams, no-look passes, alley-oops and little defense.

Momentarily irritated when Khalid El-Amin accidentally hit him across the face in the second half, Szczerbiak slammed the ball to the floor before breaking into a smile and then slapping hands with El-Amin.

Moments later Szczerbiak was forced to leave the floor with blood dripping from his cheek.

The game was part of the All-Star weekend festivities, with the game itself on Sunday.

Local favorite Steve Francis, who left Maryland after his junior season, added 20 points for the second-year team. Quentin Richardson paced the rookies with 20.

Francis hit three straight 3-pointers, delighting some of his former fans and getting the team of second-year players off and running in the first half. *AP*

# NBA All-Star game on '13' tonight

VIVA Vintage Sports will telecast the 50th NBA All-Star game today starting at 6:30 p.m. on IBC-13.

The taller West All-Stars, bannered by Kobe Bryant, Tim Duncan, Chris Webber, Kevin Garnett and Karl Malone, are considered solid favorites over the smaller but more agile East All-Star squad, led by Vince Carter, Allen Iverson, Tracy McGrady, Latrell Sprewell and Allan Houston.

The West team also includes Jason Kidd (Phoenix), Gary Payton (Seattle), Rasheed Wallace (Portland), Michael Finley (Dallas), David Robinson (San Antonio) and first-time All-Stars Antonio McDyess (Denver) and Vlade Divac (Sacramento), who is replacing an injured Shaquille O'Neal.

Rounding out the East team are Ray Allen (Milwaukee), Glenn Robinson (Milwaukee), Dikembe Mutombo (Atlanta), Jerry Stackhouse (Detroit) and first-timers Stephon Marbury (New Jersey), Athony Mason (Miami), Antonio Davis (Toronto). Injured stars Grant Hill, Alonzo Mourning and Theo Ratliff were also selected but will not play.

# Amateur circuit slated

PHILIPPINE team hopefuls for the Southeast Asian Games and other major events try to earn the big points in a drawn-out elimination process when they compete in the Titleist-Footjoy national amateur circuit starting at the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite on Feb. 20.

The race for the national team slots, however, is just one of the many battles to be fought in the circuit as there will be separate competitions for ladies and the different handicap levels.

The circuit was originally scheduled to start last Jan. 23 26 at the Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands but was called off due to the turn of political events the previous week when Edsa 2 was staged.

"With everything back to normal, we're all set for takeoff," said Iggy Clavecilla, tournament chair of the National Golf Association of the Philippines which is conducting the event in coordination with title sponsor Titleist and Footjoy.

Entry fee is P2,000 inclusive of green fees and a free practice round. Registration can be made at the offices of the NGAP (525-6987/524-5160), Global Sports (433-0782/435-1943), GG&A Club Shares and Chris Sports Plaza outlets nationwide.

# Love ahead

SAN DIEGO—Davis Love III didn't get much out of his round Saturday except the one thing that mattered at the end of the day—the lead in the Buick Invitational.

And even that wasn't saying much, not with defending champion Phil Mickelson, Tiger Woods and two dozen other players within four shots of the lead.

Despite lipping out two short par putts and wasting several good birdie chances, Love two-putted for birdie on the 18th for a 2-under 70 to take a one-stroke lead into the final round, and an opportunity to win for the second straight week.

"Anything can happen," said Love, who was at 14-under 202. "It's going to be an interesting tournament." *AP*

PRESENTED BY

**ANTONIO** (second from left) raises his trophy as Southwoods chair Bob Sobrepeña, CAP chair Enrique Sobrepeña and Freddie Mendoza of the organizing committee look on.

# Antonio captures CAP Challenge title

IT WAS a last-minute decision that turned into a huge career-boost for Roger Antonio.

Short of cash due to the lack of tournaments the past two years, Antonio almost didn't make it to the College Assurance Plan Seniors Challenge at the Manila Southwoods Masters course.

With the help of some benefactors, Antonio was able to raise his capital and quickly secured his entry. He scored 69-72 to beat Mario Siodina by three strokes and with his P20,000 paycheck, the durable ex-World Cupper is now ready for the coming battles ahead in the newly launched Philippine Golf Tour presented by CAP.

Along with Rey Pagunsan and the pro-am pair of Cassius Casas and Southwoods chair Bob Sobrepeña, Antonio made history as the first-ever winners of the new tour.

Pagunsan bagged the regular pro event, the MRT-Southwoods Open, with an impressive 14-under-par effort while Casas and Sobrepeña bested the pro-am field.

Casas, the top pro in Southwoods' stable of club pros, blended perfectly with Sobrepeña in a best-ball format for a whopping 19-under 125 effort, beating Richard Sinfuego and Emilio Tuason in the countback.

The Tour resumes next week in Baguio with the Camp John Hay Open starting Saturday, Feb. 17.

The John Hay Open is another four-in-one affair with separate competitions for the regular pros, the seniors, the pro-am side-event and the amateurs.

Meanwhile, organizers of the new local circuit was recently assured of a firm commitment from the blossoming Asian PGA Tour with respect to the granting of the so-called country slots that will guarantee local players stints in majority of the Apga events.

In an e-mailed message to Robert John Sobrepeña of the organizing group, Asian PGA Tour executive director Ramlan Harun that the results of this year's circuit will be used to determine the five country bets of the Philippines for the 2002 circuit.

Ramlan also issued his strong endorsement for the new Philippine tour, saying it will put Filipino pros back on track to aim for the bigger tours worldwide.

"Ramlan's assurance certainly gives local pros a lot of things to look forward to in the new tour. This will be another reason for them to double, even triple their efforts in the coming legs." Sobrepeña said yesterday.

# Baddeley beats Garcia

SYDNEY—Australian golfer Aaron Baddeley added the Greg Norman Holden International to his two Australian Open wins Sunday, beating Spain's Sergio Garcia on the first playoff hole at The Lakes.

The 19-year-old Australian birdied the 178-meter par-3 18th in the playoff to edge Garcia in the joint Australasian-European PGA tournament. The win earned Baddeley a two-year exemption on the European Tour.

Baddeley and Garcia, 21, started the day as co-leaders at 16-under-par, after Garcia was handed a two-shot penalty Saturday for a rule infringement over a drop during the third round. *AP*

# Delasin slips to 13th place

DOROTHY Joy Delasin struggled in the back nine en route to a one-over-par 73 and slipped to 13th spot after the penultimate round of the Takefuji Classic at the Kona Country Club in Keauhou, Hawaii.

Delasin's 213 aggregate for 54 holes all but erased her chances of winning but last year's LPGA Rookie of the Year stayed in the running for her best showing this season.

Lorie Kane of Canada upstaged Annika Sorenstam and Karrie Webb to vault ahead by two shots.

Kane, a two-leg winner last year, sizzled with a 66 for 205 with Sorenstam next at 207 after a 70. Cristie Kerr was third at 208 following a 69.

Delasin is due to arrive here again on Feb. 21 to launch a sports foundation named in her honor.

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## Salud protests venue transfer

LAWYER Rudy Salud, the manager of WBC international super flyweight champion Gerry Peñalosa, yesterday cried "foul" over the reported plan of promoter Kusung Lee to stage the May 20 title fight between Masamori Tokuyama and In Joo Cho in Seoul, instead of the previously agreed upon site of Pyongyang, North Korea. Salud, founding secretary general of the WBC, protested the plan in a letter to WBC president Jose Sulaiman.

# SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

## Pacquiao gracing Sports Forum

WORLD Boxing Council (WBC) International superbantamweight champion Manny Pacquiao and the RP men's basketball team will be guesting in tomorrow's edition of the PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn. Pacquiao is expected to talk about his upcoming fight with North Korean challenger Tetsutora Senrima on Feb. 17 at the Yñares Sports Center in Antipolo.

## RP Cuppers regain seat in Group II

BY JONG ARCANO

WHEN the rains the previous day gave the Philippine side a big reprieve, a smiling sunshine provided the perfect setting to a comeback like no other yesterday.

Showing exemplary spunk, Johnny Arcilla and Adelo Abadia brought the Philippines back to Group II play in the Asia-Oceania Zone of the Davis Cup matches after rallying from a two-set deficit to edge Tajikistan's Sergei Makashin and Mansur Yakhyaev in the deciding doubles.

Give a big boost by a hostile crowd that rocked the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center, Abadia and Arcilla dropped the first two sets, 3-5 and 4-5 (2-7), before pulling off the spectacular recovery by sweeping the next three, 4-2, 4-2 and 4-0.

Yakhyaev had earlier forged the tiebreaker by completing a 4-2, 4-1, 4-1 rout of Abadia in the second singles that was postponed due to continuous rains on Friday, leveling the tie at 1-1 after Arcilla won over Makashin.

While the Tajikistan pair appeared bothered by the blazing heat, it somehow energized Arcilla and Abadia for the almost impossible task of reversing the outcome.

"The heat really helped us a lot," said the 23-year-old Abadia in Tagalog.

With the win over Tajikistan, the Philippines joined favored Kazakhstan, which demolished Singapore in the other semifinal, as the returnees to Group II.

RP non-playing captain Joseph Lizardo paid tribute to the big fighting hearts of his frontliners.

"The boys deserve all the credit. I was there only to serve as their counsel, they did all the hardwork and I did all the cheering," Lizardo said.

Lizardo said he asked his players to keep his focus, especially after falling behind 0-2 and during a brief lull in the final set with the Filipinos leading at 1-0 where Mansur complained on pain in his right elbow and asked for medication.

There was no stopping the hosts from there as they attacked Mansur, weakened by his apparent injury, to the hilt. The RP pair clinched matchpoint on a forehand valley by Abadia.

ABADIA (left) and Lizardo whoop it up after the Philippines' victory over Tajikistan.

JESS YUSON

# Dannys power SMB to lead

GAMES WEDNESDAY *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m. – Tanduay vs Shell
7:30 p.m. – Ginebra vs SLR

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

**DANNY Ildefonso and Danny Seigle did what was expected of them and put San Miguel Beer where it is expected to be—the PBA All-Filipino Cup solo leadership.**

Ildefonso and Seigle took charge in the endgame, inflicting the baskets that finished off Pop Cola for an 85-79 SMB win last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Pursued relentlessly by the Panthers down the stretch, the Beermen's take-charge guys struck with a basket each to ensure their third straight win in as many games.

"That's what we always do, when the going gets tough, we go to Danny I and Danny S," said SMB coach Jong Uichico. "And they don't let us down everytime."

At 77-all with less than two minutes to go, Seigle escaped with a slam which Ildefonso followed up with a jumper to pull the Beermen out of trouble.

Those offensive punches were enough to finish off the gutsy Panthers, who leaned on Johnny Abarrientos, Rudy Hatfield and Jojo Lastimosa.

Pop Cola's threesome made things hard for the Beermen, neutralizing whatever edge San Miguel had in experience with their offensive capability.

The Panthers, who fell to 1-2, had 45 points just from the three.

"They are a brand-new team," said Uichico of Pop Cola. "So I expected them to give us a good fight. They played very well and defended us well."

In the second game, Red Bull had an easy repulsing an off-form Mobiline, 80-68. The Thunder posted their second straight win for a 2-1 card, while handing the Phone Pals their second loss in three games.

**First game**

**SMB 85** – Seigle 20, Ildefonso 17, Belasco 14, Lago 11, Racela 11, Victoria 6, Abuda 4, Duat 2, Gamboa 0.

**POP COLA 79** – Hatfield 19, Abarrientos 16, Lastimosa 10, Jarencio 9, Asaytono 8, Ballesteros 8, Juinio 7, Antonio 2, Bolado 0.

Quarters: 17-14, 37-33, 56-56, 85-79.

**Second game**

**RED BULL 80**—Pennisi 14, Harp 12, Briones 10, Reyes 8, Agustin 6, Mendoza 6, Tugade 6, Solis 5, Raymundo 5, Valenzuela 4, Miller 4, Capacio 0.

**MOBILINE 68**—Pablo 16, Fran 10, Gonzales 10, Demape 8, Ejercito 6, Camaso 6, Codiñera 6, Ravena 2, Babilonia 2, Cui 2, Longalong 0.

Quarters: 24-10, 35-26, 56-44, 80-68.

## POC reviving Godfather scheme

BY JUNE NAVARRO

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit yesterday said the POC will try to revive the Godfather scheme of former presidential sports consultant Richard Gomez after it got shelved following President Estrada's ouster.

Dayrit said the Godfather scheme, once approved by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, would help some national sports associations in dire need of financial support and carry the burden off the Philippine Sports Commission, the financial arm of the government in sports.

"She (GMA) is receptive to the idea but the POC has yet to present the details of the program since the President is still busy nominating her appointees on her Cabinet," said Dayrit.

A brainchild of Gomez, the Godfather scheme was designed to aid cash-strapped NSAs through the help of a benefactor, primarily from blue-chip companies and the private sector.

It is a long-term plan that would closely monitor the development of each athlete in a particular discipline in the run-up to the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

Interestingly, the PSC has its own version of the Godfather scheme, naming it Atleta, which targets bigtime sponsors for 16 elite sports. The Atleta, waiting to get the endorsement from the President, has yet to be launched.

# Spain's reign ends

LONDON—Spain's reign as Davis Cup champion ended after just two months in defeat at the Netherlands on Saturday while the United States stood on the brink of first round elimination when its doubles loss meant it trailed Switzerland, 2-1.

In the Dutch city of Eindhoven, Sjeng Schalken and Paul Haarhuis downed Alex Corretja and Juan Balcells 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-3), 7-6 (12-10) to clinch victory at 3-0 and render Sunday's singles matches irrelevant.

The result came just two months after the Spaniards had won the trophy for the first time by beating 27-time titlist Australia in Barcelona.

"It was incredibly unexpected to win here 3-0 on Saturday," Haarhuis said. "We were pleased with the fast court, but that was our only advantage so we showed great class to win."

In Basel, Switzerland, Roger Federer and Lorenzo Manta defeated Jan-Michael Gambill and Justin Gimelstob 6-4, 6-2, 7-5 and Patrick McEnroe's American team, weakened by a back injury to Todd Martin, needs to win both singles on Sunday to survive.

With Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras not making themselves available for the first round, it could be down to Gambill and either Gimelstob or 18-year-old Andy Roddick to keep the Americans in the competition if Martin fails to make it. *AP*

## Breakthrough

CLEAN LIVING

*Manolo R. Iñigo*

WELL, times have changed.

For the first time in its 107-year history, an African-American lawyer is seeking to become the first ever woman president of the International Olympic Committee.

Anita DeFrantz, a 48-year-old former Olympic bronze medal winner in rowing, recently announced her unprecedented bid for the highest and most powerful position in international sports, hoping to succeed Juan Antonio Samaranch and six other IOC male presidents, all of them white.

The IOC election is set for July 16 in Moscow where Samaranch, now 80, was elected in 1980, serving a total of 21 years and making him the longest reigning president of the IOC along with Avery brundage, who served from 1952-1972.

DeFrantz, the current IOC first vice president, is the underdog in this keenly awaited election. The youngest candidate at 48, DeFrantz is ranged against IOC heavyweights such as Pal Schmitt, a Hungarian diplomat and former fencer; Jacques Rogge of Belgium and Dick Pound of Canada, who are all 58 years old. Also a force to reckon with is South Korea's Kim Un-Yong, a much-respected IOC oldtimer who will turn 70 next month.

"I have served the Olympic movement for 24 years, which is half my age," DeFrantz said. "I want to make sure the games endure because that's my responsibility as an IOC member. And I believe I can fulfill my responsibilities best as president."

The IOC has long been dominated by men. At present, there are only some seven women among more than 106 members. Men participants have consistently outnumbered the women, 2-1, in the olympics and men competed in more medal events than women in the Games. In the ancient Olympics in Athens, women were barred from participating in the games.

But more than 2,000 years later, the breakthrough for women came during the 1900 Games in Paris where 11 female athletes were officially allowed to take part in the second edition of the modern Olympics. The number of women competitors increased from thereon, reaching a record number of 3,779 women athletes who saw action in Atlanta's Centennial Games in 1996.

Last year in Sydney, organizers provided a much better balance between men's and women's competitions. For example, Sydney narrowed the gap in athletics by holding 22 medal events for women compared to 24 events for men. The host city also followed Atlanta's pioneering move by including women's wheelchair events in the Paralympic Games.

At least for now the women's battle for equality in sports with men is making a headway. And that's a fact.

* * *

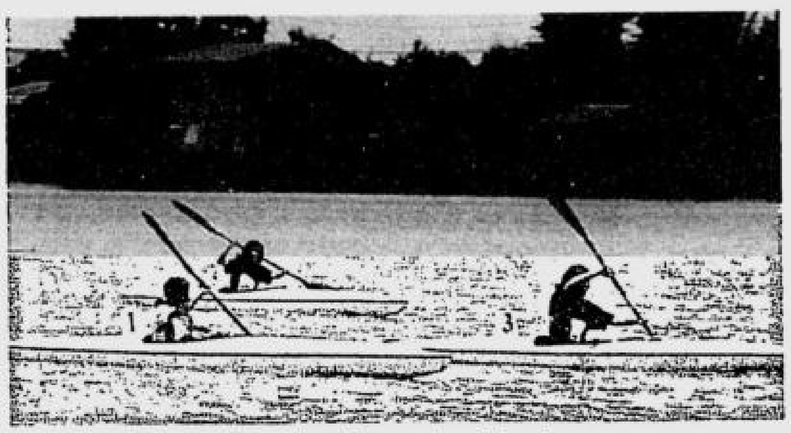
For inquiries, call fax/phone (044) 933-1214 or EasyCall 141-267284.

## Bong on top

FILIPINO Bong Villamayor bested Indian GM Dibyendo Barua on Saturday to grab top spot in the 12th Goodricke International Open chess tournament at the Alekhine Chess Club in Calcutta, India.

Villamayor, aiming for super GM status, boosted his total to 4.5 points after five rounds to pace Switzerland's Joseph Gallagher, Victor Mikhalerski and Nassir Wajih with 4 points each.

Other Filipino bets were at the lower rung of the standings with Ildefonso Datu having 2.5 points following a draw with Dimitri Reinderman. IM Nelson Mariano improved to 2 points by downing S. Meenaksi, while Chito Garma was mired at 1.5 after bowing to TS Ravi. *Roy Luarca*



PADDLERS in action at the Manggahan Floodway.

## Canoe-kayak meet set

THE COUNTRY'S finest paddlers take the centerstage when the Philippine Canoe-Kayak National Open 2001 gets under way on Feb. 18 at the Fish Port, Manggahan Floodway, in Taytay, Rizal.

Organizing the event is the Philippine Canoe-Kayak Federation under president Sim Chi Tat.

Chief backers are the Philippine Sports Commission, Mayor's Office of Taytay City, Simlab, Nippon, Life Phils., and CTU.

Registration at the Floodway is going on until Feb. 16 with a fee of P100. There will be free snacks and T-shirts.

Interested parties may call Edward de Vera at 523-4087, 9835781 and 0917-5346601.

Medals and cash prizes of P1,500, P1,000 and P500 will be given to the top finishers in the five categories to be disputed.

## RLB derby starts tonight

A NEW record in terms of crowd attendance is expected when the RLB 12th Annual Valentine 7-Cock Derby reels off at 6 tonight at the Mandaluyong Coliseum.

More than 60 quality fights are lined up in the event sponsored by Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Last year, Richard Bates promoted the RLB 7-Stag Derby which shattered all previous records at the Mandaluyong Coliseum.

Considered as one of the longest-running bigtime derby promotions in the country, the two-day cockfest is always anticipated by derby fans because of the star-studded cast organized by Bates.

Aside from United Cockers of the Philippines (Ucap) and National Cockers Association (NCA) members, Bates also invited cockers from Negros Occidental, Cebu, Iloilo, Batangas, Cavite, Pampanga, Zambales and Bulacan.

Meanwhile, the team of Boy de Roca, Danny Ty and Boy Garcia, one of the most active in the national cockfighting circuit, plays host to the "BLBG Showdown 6-Cock Derby" on Feb. 20 and 22.

## SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

**BASKETBALL:** NBA All Star Game at 7 a.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on ESPN and 6:30 p.m. on IBC 13

US NCAA - Charlotte 49ers vs Louisville Cardinals at 10 a.m. (r- tomorrow at 12:30 a.m.) and Seton Hall Pirates vs Syracuse Orangemen at 2:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

NBA All-Star Saturday Night at 2:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

**GOLF:** AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, Day One at 8 a.m. (r) and Final Day at 8 p.m. (delayed) on Star Sports

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'Incompetence is not a monopoly of movie actors' A26

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Squatting 'scam' in Bacoor bared A27

# QC dad protests inclusion of Rudy F as LDP 'guest'

FERNANDEZ

PLANAS

BY LEAH SALTERIO

**QUEZON CITY Councilor Mike Planas yesterday cried foul after learning that movie star Rudy Fernandez had been taken in as a guest candidate of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) for city mayor.**

Planas, who is running for Quezon City congressman under the LDP, is the party's chair for the city.

Planas said he felt bypassed that he was not even consulted when Fernandez was asked to join the LDP. The actor belongs to the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) party, which originally drafted him to run for mayor.

"Dictatorship is what's happening now at LDP," Planas told the INQUIRER yesterday. "When they convened last Thursday, we were not even told about it."

He warned actor Fernandez not to be "complacent" about his affiliation with the LDP because Planas "has other candidates in mind."

Planas said he has convinced other politicians to run under the party's banner, including a mayoral candidate.

Planas said that as the Quezon City LDP chair, he is tasked to make the full slate for the local elections. The party recently broke ties with the PMP.

To become mayor of Quezon City, Fernandez will have to fend off House Speaker Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte and Mayor Ismael Mathay's son, Chuck.

The action star recently portrayed the role of controversial former Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Panfilo Lacson in a movie produced by San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada's Millennium Films.

The actor earlier said he believes his chances have not changed after the ouster of former President Estrada, himself a former movie actor.

Fernandez said that even if he remained loyal to Estrada, he thinks Quezon City voters would base their choices on "the candidate's individual capacity to serve and not on his or her professional background."

He also said the "minority" should not impose its political views on the voting public.

Cause-oriented groups and people's organizations that actively campaigned against Estrada had earlier called on the voters to reject those who supported him.

**NO PICNIC**

JOAN BONDOC

It was Sunday but this woman and her two children were not enjoying a picnic in a park. A plateful of rice is hardly a picnic, after all. Besides, they were not in a park but on the sidewalk on a street at the boundary of Makati and Manila. They lost their home in an early Saturday morning fire, together with about 3,000 other residents.

# Herrera wants disappearance of 21 Chinese investigated

BOHOL Rep. Ernesto Herrera has urged the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) to look into allegations that the President Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) under Director General Panfilo Lacson was responsible for the disappearance of at least 21 Chinese in the country.

Herrera, an anti-crime crusader, was referring to the claim of Mary "Rosebud" Ong, a former anti-narcotics agent of the PAOCTF, that Lacson's men were responsible for kidnapping and then "salvaging" the Chinese.

Ong claimed that the Chinese Embassy in Manila had a list of the 21 victims.

One of them, businessman Angelito Sy Mendoza, allegedly went missing when an official of the PAOCTF asked him by telephone to come to Camp Crame on May 12, 2000.

Sy's parents, who are based in Hong Kong, are set to file a criminal complaint in connection with his disappearance.

"Ong's allegations, seem very grave, and should not just be swept under the carpet by the NBI," said Herrera, former chair of the Senate special committee on illegal drugs.

"We also want the BID involved because it is in a position to validate the claim that the alleged victims arrived but never left the country and are now missing," he pointed out.

"Once established that the alleged victims are in fact missing, then a deeper investigation must be launched."

Herrera is founding chair of the anti-crime Citizens' DrugWatch Foundation.

Ong earlier claimed that PAOCTF agents under Lacson resorted to the kidnapping-for-ransom of Chinese nationals using anti-narcotics operations as cover.

# Australian shot dead

AN AUSTRALIAN on Saturday was shot dead by a carpenter whose family he had kicked out of his compound in Port Area, Manila.

Michael Strackf, 40, a piano technician, was killed in his house in Barangay 649, Baseco Compound, Port Area by Carlos Bautista, also 40, police said.

Bautista used an improvised shotgun in shooting Strackf in the chest, police said. The foreigner died while being taken to the Gat Andres Medical Center.

In his report to the Western Police District homicide division, investigator Athos de Quiros said Strackf was having breakfast with his live-in partner Shally Bautista when Bautista barged into their house carrying a plastic bag that concealed the shotgun, police said.

Without uttering any word, Bautista immediately pulled the trigger and killed the Australian, said police, who did not explain if the Australian's partner and the suspect were related.

Bautista disappeared after the shooting and remains at large. Police recovered the murder weapon during a follow-up operation.

The investigator said Bautista had long wanted to get even with the Australian after the foreigner ordered him and his family to leave his compound.

*Christian V. Esguerra*

# Rep. Candazo accused of beating woman

BY AGNES E. DONATO

CANDAZO

A FEMALE caddie has accused Marikina City Rep. Romeo Candazo and a companion of beating her when the congressman became frustrated over his game.

Perla Benorilao, 33, of Sitio Inalsan, Barangay San Juan, Marikina, sustained bruises on the right knee and strangle marks in the neck, according to Barangay Inarawan chief Jesus Huertas.

Huertas said the beating occurred at about 1:30 p.m. on Feb. 8 while Candazo and his friend Suzette Lopez were playing at the Forest Hills Golf and Country Club in Barangay Inarawan.

Disappointed with the way the game started, Candazo reportedly got upset when caddie Benorilao failed to find the ball that had just earned him a penalty.

When Candazo still did not succeed in regaining the points he lost upon reaching the 12th hole, he allegedly started to throw balls at Benorilao, the village chief said.

Benorilao asked Lopez to hire another caddie, saying she wanted to caddie for other golfers instead.

But Lopez disagreed and suggested that she and Candazo swap caddies instead. An argument ensued, during which the congressman allegedly tried to strangle Benorilao.

The female caddie is said to be filing charges of abuse of authority, grave threats, oral defamation and physical injuries against Candazo today.

# Passenger slain by cabbie

FOR REFUSING to pay the contract price for a taxi ride, Rodel Bathan, 35, was stabbed dead on Saturday by the taxi driver himself in Sampaloc, Manila.

Taxi driver Orlando Cartago of Area B, Parola, Tondo, Manila ended the wrangling over the fare price with Bathan, of Sugartown, Batasan Hills in Quezon City, by repeatedly stabbing him.

SPO4 Herminio Gonzaga of the Western Police District Station 4 and SPO4 Rodolfo Rival of the WPD Homicide Division said Bathan, who was with his wife Melinda, 33, flagged down Cartago's taxi at the corner of A.H. Lacson and Dapitan streets at about 9 p.m. Saturday.

They asked Cartago to drive them to SM Fairview but Cartago asked for a specific amount instead of relying on the taxi meter, police said. Bathan insisted on using the meter as basis for the fare.

This led to an argument between passenger and driver, but the couple decided to get off the cab and look for another taxi, police said.

*Christian V. Esguerra*

# 3 women charged with credit card theft

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

CALOOCAN police on Saturday arrested three women suspected to be members of a syndicate stealing credit cards, and two men who were found with at least P6, 000 worth of counterfeit P500 bills.

Charged with theft were Quezon City residents Maria Luisa Escano, 26, of Bernardo Street, San Francisco del Monte; Chinate Velasco, 30, of Pangasinan Street, Bago Bantay; and Maria Rosario Jimenez, 34, Champaca Street, Roxas District.

The Caloocan City Prosecutor's Office recommended a P63,000 bail for each of the women.

SPO2 Vicencio Gambao of the Caloocan Police Station 2 said the women were arrested while trying to buy a bracelet and earrings worth P12,000 from Citygold Jewelry at the Gotesco Grand Central on Rizal Avenue Extension at about 1 p.m. Saturday.

Police said the women used a stolen Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) credit card to pay for the jewelry.

But cashier Philip Co grew suspicious when he was given the card, which was not laminated properly, said police who found out later that one of the suspects substituted her picture on the card.

Co reported the transaction to police who came to the store with Anna Nunar, who claimed to be the owner of the credit card.

A check with BPI showed that the credit was stolen.

The suspects also admitted that they had two other companions who served as lookouts. They were Rowena Bustillo, 31, of Montenegro Street, San Francisco del Monte, and Anna Teresa Magat, 20, of Champaca Street, Roxas District. Both are at large but the three suspects arrested are now detained at the Caloocan City jail.

Also in Caloocan, police arrested Rey Palma Ledesma, 38, and Alvin Gomez, 25, both of Batasan Hills, Quezon City, while buying cigarettes at a convenience store using a fake P500 bill, said PO3 Nilo Padulaga.

Police found on them at least P6,000 worth of fake P500 bills.

The store cashier suspected the money was fake and informed the owner, PO3 Ramon Cuntapay.

During interrogation, the suspects admitted they bought the counterfeit P500 bills in Quiapo, Manila for half the face value.

# Tricycle driver arrested for abusing policeman's daughter

BY AGNES E. DONATO

A TRICYCLE driver was accused of sexually abusing a policeman's 13-year-old daughter in Pasig City on Saturday afternoon.

Rape charges would be filed against Mario Crisostomo, 32, of Barangay San Joaquin, Pasig, police said.

PO3 Enrique Jimenez said the girl was playing with friends in the neighborhood when Crisostomo called her and asked her to carry a bottle of mineral water to his house at about 5 p.m. Saturday.

The girl obeyed. But when she was about to leave Crisostomo's house after bringing the bottle, Crisostomo allegedly tried to scare her by telling her there was an *aswang* standing behind her.

Police said Crisostomo then pushed the frightened girl to the floor and threatened to kill her if she tried to call for help.

Crisostomo allegedly removed her clothes and raped her, only letting her to go when they both heard the girl's sister looking for her.

Crisostomo was turned over by his brother to the victim's policeman-father, who himself arrested the tricycle driver.

Crisostomo is now detained at the Pasig police station.

Wazzzzup?

| | | |
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MONDAY, February 12 912-8983

# 'Incompetence is not a monopoly of movie actors'

**BY THE STAFF**

**INTERVIEW**

HE comes bearing a bottle of red wine under his arm. He shares the wine with the Metro staff, sipping the spirits while trying to finish his dinner and answering the questions at the same time.

Movie actor and Makati City Vice Mayor Edu Manzano is good at juggling the three acts; he makes eating and drinking elegant, and he is always good at talking, as he is at acting. His critics, however, don't agree that he can juggle politics and acting at the same time.

The first husband of Vilma Santos (now also a politician, the mayor of Lipa City, Batangas), the former husband of Maricel Soriano and the current companion of non-showbiz Rina Samson is very popular in the movie business, for his wit, his winning ways and his consistently creditable performances.

Not in politics, though. Most members of the Makati City council are one in saying Manzano has not been doing what he should as vice mayor, like sign ordinances that would make the city government run smoothly. And his biggest challenger for the mayoral post in the May elections, former Makati mayor and former Metro Manila Development Authority chair Jejomar Binay, has declared without batting an eye that Manzano would never win against him.

Informed of the Binay declaration, Manzano, too, does not bat an eye and gives exactly what he gets. If the May elections were a contest in quick-wittedness and articulateness, Manzano would be the runaway winner…

**Why do you know your wines?**

I stopped drinking (hard liquor). I have the Almanac of Wines, I got it for Christmas. It shows you exactly which country produces the best grapes or why champagne is different.

**Which country produces the best wine?**

Still Italy, and it's still the most consumed in the world.

**Do you think you're going to win as mayor?**

I guess the national temperament is changed, after Edsa. Makati really wants change.

**But (Jejomar) Binay said that based on performance, you are not going to win.**

That's his problem. He entertains delusions of grandeur. What performance is he talking about? You know, Makati owes P5.8 billion. It's all on paper. The documents are available to anybody who wants to look at them.

If we have no debts, how come Makati has appropriated P840 million for loan amortizations for the year 2001, excluding the loans we acquired during the past three years that are still enjoying a grace period from the banks? So in three or four years, we are talking about over P5 billion in debts.

**You're refuting what he claims.**

I have the documents to prove it. He has the documents but he will not dare show them.

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**How much is your net worth? Is this pre-impeachment?**

**Now?**

I'm so rich, it's pathetic. *Grabe.* No, but seriously, it's a sacrifice. I'll be very honest with you. If you come to my office, the first pay envelope I got from public office, I had it framed. There's a P5 coin attached to it.

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**You haven't been on speaking terms?**

For three years. The last time I spoke to the mayor, his wife (Elenita), was in November 1998. We have not spoken since.

**What about in functions?**

We are never together. You cannot invite me if you invite her.

**Binay admitted that he gives advice to his mayor wife.**

Obviously it's not very good advice.

**We hear from residents of Forbes Park that their garbage has not been collected since Jan. 1?**

Before Christmas *pa,* even the villages that have private contractors to pick up their garbage. The sad part there is they don't have the site to dump their garbage.

Binay has been MMDA chair for over seven years, even during the time of Ramos, and you would like to think he has visionary management so he should have foreseen that. What has happened is there is no dumping site.

**The councilors said the contractors refuse to collect the garbage because you're sitting on the budget bills.**

If they say I don't sign the budget, what comes to the forefront is the previous budget. That is mandated by law, Section 323.

Before the budget was transmitted to me, it was signed by Dr. (Elenita) Binay, and that is a violation of the law. *Baligtad* (It's the reverse). That's a criminal act. The reason I am not signing it is I will become party to the crime which I refuse to do.

Every year, the previous vice mayor got as high as P125 million a year for the total office budget. I got P16 million, of which P12.5 million goes to salary and the remaining P3.5 million goes to office supplies. So I never had special budget funds.

**But it's said you have been very good in seeking the support of the private sector.**

They have been helping. Especially the business sector. We have an ambulance, medicines, sports equipment. We have also provided employment.

**How did the war with the Binays start?**

It didn't start from me. It's just that I felt something was wrong when the first time I paid the mayor a courtesy call and I introduced myself, she told me, "Let's just make it clear that I am the mayor *at hindi ikaw.*"

**She told you that the first time you met? She wasn't kidding?**

No. That was on Sept. 2, 1998. In November that same year, we talked again, but it was just hi, hello.

**Who will be your opponent?**

Jojo. In spite of the wife being the mayor, he is very active in local government affairs. *Siya talaga ang nagpapatakbo.*

**Do you have enough money?**

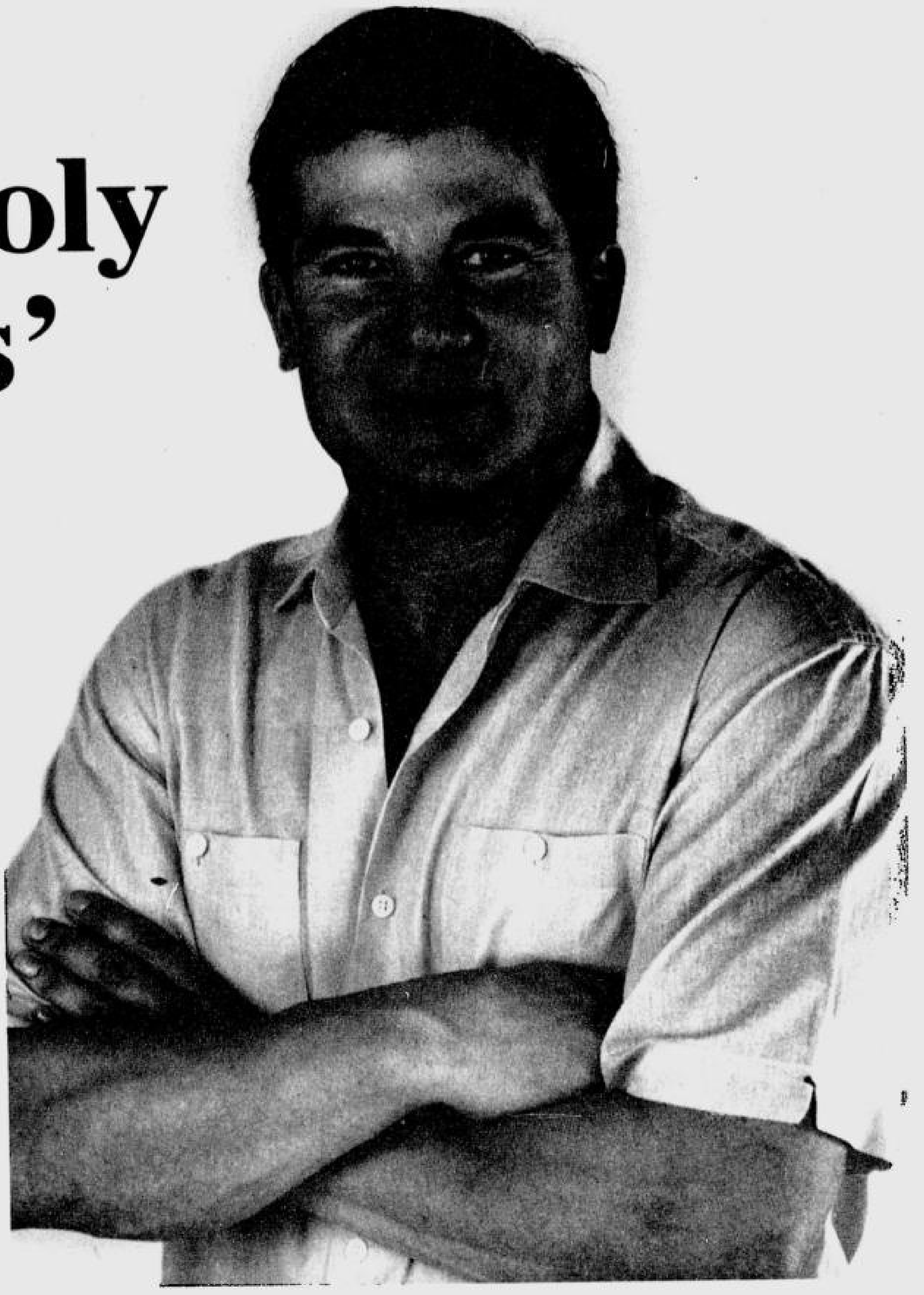
I don't think money is the issue. (Caloocan City Mayor) Rey Malonzo did not have enough money when he won. The others didn't have money when they went up against the powers that be in Pasay.

**We just ousted a former actor. There's this perception that show biz stars win in politics because they're popular. Do you think Erap's ouster would affect your chances?**

It should not. But those who are running for the first time may have problems. But, you see, incompetence is not a monopoly of actors. It was never more evident than in the impeachment trial, where we had 11 senators who proved their incompetence.

**The ouster of Erap did not make you think twice about running again?**

No. On the contrary, it only strengthened my resolve. The 11 senators who voted "no"—you've got legal luminaries, a military officer, a basketball superstar, the dancer, a former actor. These have got to be the most incompetent public servants you've ever had.



MANZANO, the apple of Rina Samson's eye but not of Jejomar Binay.

**Why do you want to run for mayor? You can run for another term as vice mayor.**

When the deliberate basic services are not dependent on sincere desire, you know something is wrong. I have, for the past three years, been exposing the widespread graft and corruption in Makati. I would like to see change.

**Aren't you afraid of cheating, death threats, terrorism, guns?**

During the recent People Power, we had terrorism in Makati. Binay's henchmen apparently beat up some anti-Erap supporters.

Terrorism and hooliganism have no place in Makati. *Nakakahiya, 'di ba?* Makati is basically on its knees already. You go to any building, you'll see offices with signs that say "space for rent." In Makati, we now have entire buildings for rent. They're practically empty.

**What do you intend to do to turn that around?**

The only way is to harness the stakeholders—the business community, the NGOs, the urban poor. You have to be able to harness all these forces.

In Makati, the budget for year 2000 was P3.7 billion and for 2001, it's P4.2 billion. How can you increase your budget when your tax base is dwindling? You have the offices and people are moving out of Makati, so who will pay the taxes? The budget has to be increased so the total volume of your loan decreases in terms of percentage.

Our biggest problem right now is people are really moving out of Makati. How many houses that used to be leased out in Dasmariñas and Forbes Park are now unoccupied?

**Why?**

Money is tight. At the same time, Makati is exaggerated in terms of real estate values which, of course, directly affect those things. So how can you say you'll make more money this year than last year?

So I would like to meet the economic advisers of Mr. Binay because their decree should be recalled.

**What do you have control of as vice mayor?**

My office and the council, where I preside. At the same time, we don't have the city secretary. The secretary reports directly to the mayor or to Jojo. The problem is even though your secretary is so incompetent, there's nothing you can do. Based on the charter, you have no control of the secretary. I would like to get a secretary of my choice, someone who can really do the job. In the meantime, *kawawa naman ang Makiteño.*

**You don't have graft and corruption cases?**

None.

**What about the allegation that you've been sitting on the budget?**

That's not graft and I have asked them to sue me.

**They said they would.**

They are taking so much time. We don't have that time anymore.

**The complainants are the league of Barangays in Makati and the owners of clubs. The case against you is dereliction of duty.**

In fact, the NGOs have issued a manifesto in support of my not signing. The league of barangays does whatever Binay tells it to do. If I am indeed guilty, then sue me.

I returned to them a resolution ordinance which involves P635 million worth of furniture and fixtures for the new city hall which is only 22 floors. From what I understand, they're solid gold.

**Why do you allow the name of Councilor Dean Barbers to be associated with your name?**

He has also been exposing graft and corruption in Makati.

**People who see you together remark that you have this "act," like Laurel and Hardy or Dolphy and Panchito.**

*Para kaming* ReyCard Duet. *Ako si* Rey, *siya si* Carding. He has a strong resemblance to Carding.

We never really made an effort to be close to each other. We even come from different parties. Dean was one of the graft busters in the council.

**Why aren't you friends with the council?**

It's very, very hard when, for example, you have P635 million for only phases 6 and 7 of the new city hall and there's not even an itemized listing of what they bought.

I will hate to approve P630 million for furniture without an itemized listing. So when somebody says I would like to see the list and he discovers that there's graft and corruption involved, *damay ako.* So why will I be party to a crime?

***Lahat ba 'yon* in one document?**

Last year, our budget was P3.7 billion. This year, it's P4.2 billion. I am not sitting on the budget. It's the subject of a court case.

The process is from the Sanggunian to the vice mayor and the vice mayor transmits to the mayor. The problem is, it was approved by the mayor without my signature. So if I sign now, I will be party to a crime and I will not allow that to happen.

The delivery of basic services must never be delayed. In a case like this, if it's a stalemate, you apply the old budget in order to continue operations while the court case is being resolved.

**How many bodyguards do you have?**

Not one. Never had.

**Where do you shop for clothes?**

I am forever grateful to Ben Chan of Bench.

**What's your belt?**

*'Yan may kamahalan 'yan.* Seiko.

**Your shoes?**

*Pareho kami ni* (Navotas Mayor) Toby Tiangco, Ferragamo. They were [illegible] sale.

**How much cash do you carry daily?**

P4,000-P,5000 easily.

**Can people go to your house?**

No, they go to my office. I've never believed in involving your family in politics if it's not their choice. You can find me anywhere, all over Makati, in the barangays… Besides, *walang* jeep *na pumapasok sa* village *namin,* so *mahihirapan din sila.* And I have a six-year-old daughter and a seven-year-old son with Rina (Samson).

**Si Lucky (his son with Vilma Santos)?**

His name is Luis.

**How's your relationship with Luis?**

Very good. I see him on weekends when he calls me up. Sometimes even on weekdays, when he comes to the house.

**You give him an allowance?**

When he needs money, I send him to his mother. "*O, diyan ka muna anak. Sabihin mo nag-away tayo. 'Tapos 'pag nakakuha ka na ng pera sa* Mommy *mo, 'balik ka na rito.*" And I ask him to get some for me also.

**Of course you're joking.**

Yes, I'm joking.

**What did Luis take after you?**

I think his socio-dynamics, his friendliness.

**Why should people vote for you?**

Honestly, I can say with total commitment that I am really sincere. I really feel I want to do something for their lives, given half the chance.

Look, Ayala is in Makati. But Ayala is Ayala. They have their own police, maintenance and waste management. Rockwell is also like that, a city within a city. Doesn't it dawn on you why Rockwell and Ayala are very clean areas? Don't you ever wonder why their macro-planning is great?

**They have the money.**

If, for example, the master plan is not acceptable to the loan syndicates or the banks that provide the money, *sayang.* But they see the promise, they see the vision, they see the mission, that's why they approve it. The Philippine Business for Social Progress has stated that Makati has 32 percent of its population under the poverty line.

**How much do mayors get?**

I cannot live on P27,000 a month. *Matagal na 'kong abonado.* So I

INCOMPETENCE/A27

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## THE DAILY GOSPEL

**Monday, February 12, 2000**
**6th Week in Ordinary Time**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1st Reading:** | **Gen 4:1-15, 25** |
| **Gospel:** | **Mk 8:11-13** |

The Pharisess came and started to argue with Jesus. Hoping to embarrass him, they asked for some heavenly sign. Then his spirit was moved. He gave a deep sigh and said, "Why do the people of this present time ask for a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this people." Then he left them, got into the boat again and went to the other side of the lake.

**Commentary**

People who have to prove something all the time end up oppressing themselves with a very stressful way of life. Every effort becomes a vain cover-up for what is really insecurity. Every move of theirs is measured. They try to live up to expectations and eventually become miserable. Jesus' refusal to give in to the pharisees' demand for a sign shows he was totally secure about himself, his identity and mission, he did not feel like he had to prove anything at all. For him, it was quite enough to be himself, and to do what he believed his Father was asking him to do.

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## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Abuse of superior strength**—Abuse of superior strength cannot be appreciated against the appellants. It must be stressed that this circumstance must be established by clear and categorical evidence. There must exist proof that the attackers deliberately took advantage of their superior strength, their apparent superiority in number vis-à-vis that of the victim, notwithstanding. The records showed no such proof. In the present case, the lone eyewitness did not see how the aggressors attacked the victim. There was no clear proof as to how appellants took advantage of their combined strength in committing the crime. What should be considered, as regards this aggravating circumstance, is not that there were three, four or more assailants as against one victim, but whether the aggressors took advantage of their combined strength in order to consummate the offense. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Puno, First Division, People v. Bonito, G.R. No. 128002, October 10, 2000]

# The price is not right

**BARE EYE**

*Recah Trinidad*

WHEN he signed up for the Ysmael Steel Admirals, all that four-time basketball Olympian Narciso Bernardo got as incentive was a brand-new refrigerator, plus a steel filing cabinet as extra bonus.

No kidding, said my amazed friend Mar in Lipa City on Saturday.

I'm serious. I learned of this from *Aling* Doray, Bernardo's mother herself, when I was still a kid. Seven-Up was trying to sign up Ciso, who starred for National University in the UAAP, but he ended up with Ysmael.

Only a refrigerator? You should've told that in your story about Danny Ildefonso, my friend said.

You think it would be of any use?

I don't know, he said after puffing his cigar, but imagine basketball stars today being offered more than enough to last them four lifetimes.

No problem actually if they are really worth it. If they, say, had played well in top Asian competitions and made us a little happy and proud.

You think there will be an end to these price tag wars in the PBA?

I don't know really. At least that P96-mllion offer for Ildefonso had been stopped because the PBA itself realized the brutal bargaining could ultimately ruin the league.

* * *

**We sipped our drinks, thanked the village gods for the cool, perfumed air, made exquisite by coffee blossoms, the world's finest, and continued to look further back to the days of great Filipino basketball Olympians.**

**Carlos Loyzaga, who almost single-handedly sold Yco Paint and made a fortune for the Elizaldes, had to migrate to Australia where he worked in a Sydney biscuit factory.**

**And Lauro Mumar?**

**The skipper of the Philippine team that finished third in the 1954 World Championship died with a broken heart. He got depressed after he was eased out of the technical board of the old Philippine Amateur Basketball League.**

**What about the great Carlos Badion?**

**He has just stepped out of the hospital. He told me he has quit smoking.**

**Who else can you remember? I was asked.**

**Franco Marquicias? Have you heard of him?**

**No, who's he?**

**He was a teammate of Ambrosio Padilla, the late senator, in the Philippine team that played in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. That great team, coached by Chito Calvo, lost only one game but inexplicably finished only fifth in the Berlin Games.**

**But what about Mr. Marquicias?**

**He once told me that, on the eve of their departure for international competitions, they would make the rounds of friends to borrow at least an extra pair of playing socks.** ***Pati sa medyas kulang.***

* * *

Well, Franco Marquicias, who played for Heacock's and later coached his sons in the old Micaa league, could not himself believe that Bernardo got a refrigerator as incentive.

The old man did not believe Bernardo was worth that much for Ysmael Steel?

Not really, I said, but during the old days, *Mang* Franco told me that a player must be very, very good, he must be first class, before he could get an extra pair of brand-new playing shoes from his team.

What about the socks, I was asked.

Well, compared to what those great Filipino basketball Olympians, our new breed of multi-millionaires in the pro league could themselves pale like cheap playings socks. No kidding.

But who's to blame for the runaway price tags of today's basketball stars?

The fans, they've allowed themselves to be blinded by these fancy things. They hardly care about true value. In fact, they no longer seem to care that the current brand of Filipino basketball is no longer competitive in international competitions.

You mean players are generally measured by how much they earn.

Exactly!

* * *

**Mar asked: Do you mean big-time basketball here has become nothing more than an advertising war?**

**You're right again, I said. It no longer matters how these players compare to Asian neighbors. The Philippines, which used to lord it in the region, is no longer regarded a serious title threat. But what matters now is glamour. It's the main ingredient in good product-selling.**

**Just the same, these millionaire players still serve their purpose. They do help sell the products of their teams.**

**Yes, I said, but they have, in the process, shared in projecting wrong sporting values.**

**How?**

**Well, if one player, like Danny Ildefonso, could be offered P50,000 for every game won, how do you think fans would react?**

**Well, I would start believing that Ildefonso must be really that great, my friend replied. Imagine a P50,000 bonus for each won game.**

**Well it's not actually Ildefonso's fault, I said.**

**So what's the problem?**

**The problem is that Ildefonso will also start believing he's really that great.**

**Maybe they should start giving refrigerators as signing incentive again?**

**No way. It won't work, even if that refrigerator costs a million pesos.**

# Squatting 'scam' in Bacoor bared

SEVEN people who were found to have illegally built homes in a subdivision in Bacoor, Cavite have blown the whistle on what could be a multimillion-peso squatting scam.

The seven are among about 3,000 families discovered to have built their houses in Green Valley Subdivision in Barangay San Nicolas without building permits or other proper documents, according to Bacoor municipal engineer Felicito Mejia and Dr. Concepcion Sumulong.

In their sworn statements received by police Insp. Arsenio Carandang Gomez on Feb. 1, 2001, the seven claimed to have paid from P500 to P10,000 for the rights to the land as well as membership and monthly fees to a certain "ladies association" and a foundation that two of them identified as the Ramon Revilla Jr. (RRJ) Foundation.

Ramon Revilla Jr. is also the name of Cavite Gov. Bong Revilla.

They said that although they kept demanding for receipts for the money they paid, they never received any.

The seven complainants are Berlinda M. Gomez, 40; Elena S. Tagle, 67; Wilfredo L. Sanchez Jr., 32; Marilou C. Malate, 33; Jose R. Camillotes, 21; Elvie C. Montoya, 30; and Leticia Sanado, 50. They are set to file a case against those who collected their money, according to sources at the Office of the Bacoor Mayor.

On Feb. 2, the day after they gave their sworn statements to the Bacoor police, the office of Gov. Revilla issued a press release saying the Green Valley squatters were paying P10,000 each to the political leaders of Bacoor Mayor Jessie B. Castillo.

The statement identified the political leaders as Rosario Sanado and Carol Lobiogo.

Mayor Castillo denied the allegations, saying that, on the contrary, his office is ordering the demolition of the squatters' homes.

Sanado said she paid Maggie Lazarte, wife of barangay councilor Larry Lazarte, P10,000 for the land rights, another P800 for compulsory membership in the Homeowners Ladies Association headed by Mrs. Lazarte, and another P100 for the RRJ Foundation which she spelled out as the "Ramon Revilla Jr. Foundation."

Sanado admitted she was sergeant at arms of the ladies association and, on orders of Mrs. Lazarte, was collecting the P900 membership fees.

Apart from paying for the land rights, Camillotes, Montoya and Gomez also claimed they paid monthly dues of P10 each to the association of the Lazartes.

Sanchez said he made his payments to Andy Gamboa and his wife Leonor Baluyot, both residents of Green Valley.

Tagle said she paid a certain Saryo Tanado P5,000 on Jan. 21 for the right to build a house on a 50 sq. m. lot.

Sources at the Bacoor municipal hall said that the "rights" alone would bring a whopping P600 million to whoever is behind the alleged scam. They said this amount does not include the membership fees paid to the Homeowners Ladies Association and the RRJ Foundation.

## 'Rudy F' dead

A MANILA city jail inmate and namesake of action star and Quezon City mayoral candidate Rudy Fernandez died of an apparent heart ailment in prison Thursday afternoon.

The Western Police District homicide section said Rudy Fernandez, 33, single and a resident of Barangay San Juan, San Jose Del Monte City, Bulacan, collapsed at about 2:40 p.m. while he was chatting with his cellmates.

Jail officials brought him to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center in Sta. Cruz, but it was too late.

Fernandez was arrested for snatching a businesswoman's bag in Binondo last December. Since Feb. 3, he reportedly had been complaining of shortness of breath and dizziness and had to be confined in the jail infirmary. *Jerome Aning*

# Foreign detainees offer to help bust syndicates

BY ALCUIN PAPA

FOREIGNERS detained at the Bureau of Immigration detention center in Bicutan, Taguig, last week said they were willing to help new immigration chief Andrea Domingo in breaking up drug and human smuggling syndicates run by other foreigners in exchange for their freedom and protection.

"There are some of us here who are willing to help Domingo because we believe she can do something about it, not like the (one she replaced)," said a detainee who asked not to be named. "It makes no sense to keep us here when we can do something good outside. So why not release us so we can help?"

Domingo earlier said she is favoring the release of the more than 200 detainees since the government does not have the means to feed them.

The INQUIRER learned most of the detainees claimed they were "set up" by drug dealers and human smugglers.

Also, many of them were sent to the detention center to cover up for various crimes. Others were detained because they said they "threatened" some businessmen.

"If Domingo and other crusading lawyers want to be Don Quixotes and fight the criminal elements in Philippine society against all odds, we will be their Sancho Panzas," the detainees said.

They also appealed to Domingo for a thorough review of their cases in exchange for the information they would provide. If they would be released, they would also like government protection, they said.

"The syndicates and the persons we are willing to go up against are very powerful people and have ways to get back at us in case we were to help authorities," they said. "If it's not too much, we would like to ask for protection."

Last month, the detainees appealed to Domingo to release them, saying they were denied due process and illegally detained.

They also said they would seek redress and file cases against former immigration officials.

# Incompetence is not a monopoly . . .

**(From page A26)**

have certain investments.

(President) Gloria (Macapagal-Arroyo) gets P50,000. That is crazy. Why can't you pay a president P2 million a month? My point here is, with just one signature, you can dictate the future of every Filipino and you earn only P50,000 a month?

**How much is your net worth?**

Is this pre-impeachment?

**Now?**

I'm so rich, it's pathetic. *Grabe.* No, but seriously, it's a sacrifice. I'll be very honest with you. If you come to my office, the first pay envelope I got from public office, I had it framed. There's a P5 coin attached to it.

I don't just help Makati residents. Up to this day, movie people still come to me and I give them.

The biggest number of people that came to my office asking for money in one day was 125.

**How much do you give?**

It depends. Sometimes P100. Often, you're forced to spend your own money. The office of the vice mayor has only a P16 million budget, but the office of the mayor has over a billion pesos budget for year 2001.

**So how much is your net worth?**

I never really thought about it, but I have a farm in Iloilo. I also have an island in Iloilo.

I lost too much money in the stocks in 1999. I will never play the stock market again. Even before that, when Petron was sold, I bought so many shares, then *bumagsak.*

**Are you always conscious of your looks?**

No. Through the years, people have told me I'm good looking. I've stopped believing them. I'm 45.

You know, I can start the day after the shower without even looking at my face in the mirror. As God is my witness.

**You're not vain?**

My biggest luxury is Vicky Belo (a dermatologist and liposuction specialist). Derma and facial.

**How come Rina has never been visible? She is rarely seen with you in public.**

Because I want her to enjoy her life. She has a fantastic private life. I don't want Rina to smile because she has to. I want her to smile because she wants to.

I have been a witness to how girlfriends or wives have to smile because it's part of the political process. That will not happen to my family. My family will smile when they want to smile.

**They said you punched someone in Giraffe?**

Did someone ever come up front and say I did? But there was this very sad, puny public official who took advantage of the situation. I don't even want to dignify him by mentioning his name. But this person went out of his way to send his henchmen, and he even spent for it.

**You never issued a denial.**

I did. And even the owner of the establishment said it never happened.

**When did you stop drinking? After that Venezia incident?**

David Bunevacz, who was said to have carried me out of that venue because I was too drunk, even issued a statement to deny it. It's really interesting how desperate some people can be.

**Who are these people?**

Those who have interest in continued dominance of Makati politics.

**Rina is not against your political career?**

She is. In Rina's case, it's been very hard for her because my job takes me away from the family. She never gets enough time with me. She's crazy about me, but she would rather not see me anymore.

**If and when you become the mayor, don't you think Rina should be more visible?**

The city in itself should be in a position to provide the basic services that the wife can provide. *Kung siya ay haharap sa tao, bakit pa* if you have health services or social services? But I would ask Rina to head some projects, like perhaps a feeding program. If she says no, I will respect that. But she is one of the country's finest mothers.

**Because you're the father?**

Aside from that, of course.

**You obviously mellowed because of Rina. Why?**

She stood by me. I respect her individuality. I've seen what a fantastic mother she is. She's now a full-time mother and a full-time housewife.

**She gave up her airline job?**

Yeah, two and a half years ago, after the 1998 elections.

**Do you carry pictures of your kids in your wallet?**

(Takes out his wallet and shows the photos of his two children with Rina). Amanda Danielle is 7. We call her Adi, named after my dad. Lorenzo Eduardo, Enzo, is 6.

This is Luis. Some say he's the spitting image of his father. He's cool.

**What's your biggest fear about your children?**

I am really, really putting a lot of my life on the inaugural speech of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. You know, she talked about education, moral leadership.

**What's that got to do with your kids?**

I honestly believe that we survive in a society that has lost all values. I would like to be able to say goodbye to my kids tomorrow, knowing they're in good hands.

**What's your biggest weakness?**

Sometimes, I feel it's been so unfair the way I have lived. To this day, I still see people, six, eight members in a family who occupy a 25-square-meter home. It gets kind of sad.

*Kami kasing mga artista,* when the director says we will shoot in a squatter area, it's in a real squatters' area, not just a makeshift set. You see the lives of the people and you start getting depressed. When people start asking you for money, P100 means a lot to them. It makes me so guilty.

MANZANO

In Makati, one of the biggest problems is drugs. *Grabe ang* drugs *sa* Makati. But then, drugs, like alcoholism, spouse abuse, domestic violence... all these things can be part and parcel of poverty. So when you go to the less privileged areas, it's all there. That's when you start asking questions.

The government has identified the biggest drug pusher in Makati, but we're not allowed to identify him yet, pending verification and ongoing investigation.

**Does he come from a rich family?**

No.

**When you become mayor, what will be the first thing that you will do?**

I have no idea. My biggest plan is to gather the entire business sector. I have a program called "Adopt a Barangay." We will ask the major players in the city to help the barangays. We have barangays with no roads and no water. The ones in C-5, Cembo, Pembo, Rembo, Northside, Southside... in Fort Bonifacio.

**Have you been to their shanties?**

Yes.

**You've covered every nook and cranny of Makati?**

I would like to think so.

(*While eating, Manzano occasionally pops whole red chili peppers into his mouth and chews them)* **What does the chili do to you?**

It increases my appetite.

**Is it true that it increases the libido?**

So I am led to believe.

It's very sad you never met my father. He used to eat *sili* with banana, *sili* with mango and mangosteen with *sili*. My mother can take care of all her orchids in the garden, but she can never touch the *sili* bush of my father. He picked the *sili* from the bush and he would wash them in the sink. He died in 1983.

**Binay said you're visible in Makati only lately because it's election time. Otherwise, you're always shooting.**

On the contrary, I've been very hardworking. I have documents to prove that when we debate over Makati purchases, I would ask the mayor what I should do. I have papers to show that. I was never answered. I even wrote the former President and the resigned DILG secretary.

**Where does show biz come in your political plans?**

I believe any actor who is elected into office should stop making movies voluntarily.

**So you're going to give up movies for good when you become mayor?**

You have no choice. You must.

# Wife wants to replace Pasig Mayor Eusebio

THE WIFE of incumbent Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio last week filed her certificate of candidacy before the local Commission on Elections, becoming the first mayoral candidate in Metro Manila.

Soledad Eusebio, an accounting graduate of the University of the East, said she decided to run for the post to continue the programs of her husband, who has been Pasig mayor for the past nine years.

Mrs. Eusebio will be running with incumbent Vice Mayor Lorna Bernardo under the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP-KAMPI coalition.

"I don't think there is anything wrong with our woman-woman tandem," Mrs. Eusebio said. "I believe women have the heart and the brains to do things that are supposed to be for men."

The party's candidates for councilor of the city's first district are Roberto Barretto, Fortunato Co, Gregorio Rupisan Jr., Joy San Buenaventura, Andy Santiago and Jose Tatco.

For the second district, the candidates are Charmie Benavides, Macario Cruz, Ely de la Cruz; Robert Eusebio, Rosalio "Yoyong" Martirez and Reynaldo Raymundo.

Mrs. Eusebio said that if she won, literacy would be the target of her administration.

Although this is her first time to run in an election, Mrs. Eusebio claimed she is not a neophyte in politics.

"I have been one of my husband's closest advisers," she said. "I have also attended several seminars on good government."

She is chair of the Pasig City Clean and Green Program and vice president of the Metro Manila Mayors Spouses Foundation Inc.

She dispelled speculations that her family was using her to maintain its hold on Pasig politics.

"I will not allow myself to be used either by my husband or other family members to pursue their own interests," she said. "I am my own person. I will not enter into something if I am not confident that I can do the job." *Agnes E. Donato*

# Geronimo picked in Parañaque

BROADCAST personality and former sectoral Rep. Adolfo "Ka Gerry" Geronimo has been named the congressional candidate of the People Power Coalition (PPC) for Parañaque City's lone district.

Geronimo thus becomes one of the select Reporma-LM candidates in the May elections.

Host of the long-running, agriculture-oriented TV show "Ating Alamin," Geronimo is also current national spokesman of the Reporma, a political party founded by now Executive Secretary Renato de Villa.

The party is anchored on a reformist agenda.

Reporma-LM pushed hard for the selection of Geronimo as official PPC candidate, who has vowed to craft a reform/development agenda for his city.

"Parañaque City should have a representative in Congress with a defined agenda on urban development, on livelihood opportunities on the optimization of technological advances to promote economic development," Geronimo said. "I feel I have the vision, the dedication and the competence for that."

# Girl plays unaware pa is dead

THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD daughter of businessman Alfonso F. Martinez did not know her father lay dead from a gunshot wound in the head when she played in his room late Wednesday afternoon.

When she approached his bed, she saw her father's pillow was red with blood.

Martinez, 33, of October Street, Congressional Village in Project 8, Quezon City had a bullet wound in the right temple, said investigator PO3 Randy Escobido.

Martinez was found dead about 4 p.m. Police said only a housemaid was in the house when Martinez was supposed to have shot himself, Escobido said.

But police said they could not be sure that Martinez killed himself even though no other injuries were found in his body.

Martinez did not leave a suicide note and his family did not give police a statement that could shed light on his death. The family also did not allow police to conduct an autopsy, Escobido said.

He added police could not also ascertain if Martinez fired the gun because the family did not allow them to conduct a paraffin test. *Philip C. Tubeza*

# Turning 30 without a love life

*WARNING: If you don't want to read "another article" about me and my life, then please skip this particular column.*

**KRIS AND TELL**

*Kris Aquino*

HAVE you noticed how much our attitude about birthdays changes with each passing year?

From my 1st to my 20th birthday, I excitedly counted the months, days, and hours until the big day. I felt so special, and my kiddie birthday parties were such looked-forward-to events especially because my mom and three older sisters would pull out all the stops to give me a grand extravaganza.

Now that I'm hitting the big 3-0 (yup, I'm turning 30 on Wednesday) I am no longer as eager to celebrate. The day now strikes me with a measure of dread. Hitting 30 means it's time to be more responsible and less giddy, to be more mature because you no longer have youthful exuberance as a stand-by excuse.

It's a time for laying down roots, not just reaching for the sky, and for most women, it's also filled with self- and society-inflicted pressure about settling down.

I went about things rather unconventionally, and since I do have Josh, my biological clock ticking away no longer frightens me. But my narrowing chances at finding a lifetime partner do.

I readily admit that if there is one aspect of my life that I have, sadly, been a failure at, that is my love life. And turning 30, without even a hope of a prospective Valentine-birthday date, is quite shattering.

"It will eventually come" and "You should be grateful for all that you've been blessed with" are statements people close to me often say as consolation. And most of the time I really do believe them.

I enter my thirties with a new motto, an add-on to my existing guiding principle in life, which is "To whom much is given, much is expected in return." Ironically, it originated as one of those forwarded texts which I hate, but it is very appropriate: "The secret to happiness is not in having what you want, but in wanting what you have."

In order to shake off some unnerving birthday blues, I now dwell on what I'm very fortunate to have.

I have a handsome, sweet, devoted, and loving son.

I have my mom's unconditional love and unwavering support for my endeavors. And she has imparted values that continue to guide my life towards good.

I have very good and caring sisters, **Ballsy, Pinky** and **Viel**, who haven't tired of babying and humoring me, yet manage to keep my feet firmly painted on the ground. Plus a cousin, **Rina**, who's even more than a sister to me. She's seen me through everything and she continues to be my refuge and my confidante.

I have loyal, affectionate, trustworthy and sincere friends, both in and out of showbiz. It's seemingly impossible to have or sustain them in a business like ours, but with **Zsa Zsa Padilla** and with **Pops Fernandez**, there's never any jealousy for whatever good breaks and opportunities may come, just genuine support and girl-power spirit.

And my praying buddies keep me in tune with the world beyond the cameras, and we grow spiritually, together.

I have a career I'm passionate about, which continues to challenge me, and which in recent years has given me credibility and fulfillment. I respect the people I work with (**Deo, Boy, Gia, Louie**, and everybody in my ABS-CBN family) and they share my dedication to the job.

I have the opportunity to write down my thoughts and freely express my opinions, via this column about anything and everything that strikes my fancy.

(By the way, there's an e-mail going around that starts with my January 24 column about the lessons I've learned from Edsa but goes on to state opinions that I frankly don't share. Some of the subsequent statements were quite vindictive and hard-hitting, which, if you've been reading me regularly, is totally not my style. My original column ended with "God is good all the time" and a birthday greeting for my mom. That's it. Whoever is printing words and sentiments purportedly coming from me, please stop. Haven't you realized by now that I'm an independent thinker and I already have enough to say on my own?)

I have good health, although I need to lose at least 10 pounds. (I started an eating routine that is low-starch, meaning as much as possible no rice, potatoes, pasta, pancit, white bread and my favorite *pan de sal;* less sugar which is a compromise because I'm trying to totally eliminate soft drinks, canned fruit juices and sugared iced tea mix drinks but had to allow myself one glass of Quickly Taro milk every afternoon; high-protein mostly grilled beef, pork and chicken, because I'm not a fish eater; and high-vegetable fiber. Let's see the results after a month.).

And I have a strong and resilient relationship with my Creator.

There may not be a husband, or even a boyfriend in the horizon, but if that's the only thing that's missing in my life now that I'm turning 30, I can live with it.

But not for the next 30 years of my life, please.

Let me make a plug for my 30th birthday celebration on "Today with Kris" airing tomorrow and Wednesday at 11 a.m. on ABS-CBN. We are taping it tonight, and what's going to happen is a total surprise for me. I'm normally involved with even the minutest detail of each of my show's episodes, but this time I'm clueless as to what's in store.

Advanced happy birthday to my fellow Valentine babies, Sen. **Juan Ponce Enrile, Donna Cruz, Rico J. Puno, Joanne Lorenzana** and **John Pratts.**

# Gearing up for the Oscars

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

TOMORROW, Feb. 13, the US film industry's Academy will announce the finalists in the Oscar Awards for the year 2000. As always, public interest in the Academy's choices runs high because, rightly or wrongly, the Oscars are regarded as the most popular, if not the most important, annual awards for exceptional achievement in film.

But some film buffs can't wait for the Academy's official announcement, and have come up with hopefully educated guesses of how Oscar's mind works this year. When the official list is released, we can compare their predictions and see how well they've been able to second-guess the 5,700 members of the Academy.

Our cinematic seers don't rely on gut-feel, but have arrived at their predictions by surveying the early choices of various critics' groups.

In the best picture category, they note that the New York Film Critics Circle has picked "Traffic," **Steven Soderbergh**'s gritty film about the drug war. Its counterpart in Los Angeles favors **Ang Lee**'s "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," and the Boston critics are partial to **Cameron Crowe**'s "Almost Famous."

To complete the list, the National Board of Review is sold on **Philip Kaufman**'s "Quills," a film on the **Marquis De Sade**. In addition, other groups favor **Ridley Scott**'s "Gladiator" and "Erin Brokovich" (another movie by Soderbergh).

Take note that the groups can't agree on which film to push for the top award, so expect a really bumpy ride for the eventual winner of the Oscar for best picture.

In the best director race, however, things aren't so confused. Four groups agree on Soderbergh, specially since he megged not one but two outstanding movies last year – so it looks like Soderbergh is "it."

Best Actor? Confusion reigns once more, as different groups cite different lead players. Sifting through the mix, some relatively solid choices include **Tom Hanks** in "Cast Away," **Russell Crowe** in "Gladiator," **Geoffrey Rush** in "Quills," **Michael Douglas** in "Wonder Boys," newcomer **Mark Ruffalo** in "You Can Count On Me," and 14-year-old **Jamie Bell** in "Billy Elliot."

Finally, in the best actress category, it looks like a no-contest year with **Julia Roberts** ("Erin Brokovich") topping three groups' lists.

Other possible finalists include **Laura Linney** in "You Can Count On Me," **Ellen Burstyn** in "Requiem for a Dream," **Juliette Binoche** in "Chocolat," **Joan Allen** in "The Contender," **Bjork** in "Dancer in the Dark" and **Renee Zellweger** in "Nurse Betty."

### Live telecast

INCIDENTALLY, if you want to get first crack at the list of Oscar nominees, catch the Star Movies channel's live broadcast of the 73rd Annual Academy Awards Nominations Special at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 13.

And, for the latest Oscar buzz, log on to http://oscars.startv.com.

### Vilma Santos starrers

SOME Vilma Santos starrers are featured on Viva Cinama this month:

On Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 8 p.m., "Palimos ng Pag-ibig" co-stars the Star for All Seasons with **Dina Bonnevie, Edu Manzano, Pepito Rodriguez** and **Cherie Gil.**

On Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 6 p.m., "Relaks Ka Lang, Sagot Kita" also topbills **Bong Revilla, Vic Vargas** and **Anthony Alonzo.**

On Saturday, Feb. 24 at 8 p.m., "Hanggang Ngayon Ika'y Minahal" also stars **Christopher de Leon, Antoinette Taus** and **Mumay Santiago.**

### TV treats

MONDAY, Feb. 12 at 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Golden Dogs" is about golden jackals as predators.

Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 2 p.m. on Viva Cinema, "Akuhstic by the Sea" – **Kuh Ledesma** sings in Boracay. At 6 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, three specials, including "Love in the Wild," and "Foxes of the Kalahari." At 9 p.m. on Star Movies," A Midsummer Night's Dream" with **Michelle Pfeiffer, Rupert Everett** and **Calista Flockhart.**

Thursday, Feb. 15 at 9 p.m. on Star Movies, "What Dreams May Come," starring **Robin Williams.**

At 8 tomorrow night, Tuesday, on the National Geographic Channel, "Bird Brains" shows that some birds are smarter than most people think.

The researchers featured include Dr. **Irene Pepperberg**, who has studied the language and learning skills of African gray parrots; Dr. **Russell Balda** and Dr. **Nicola Clayton**, who have focused on the memory and communication skills of pinions and scrub jays; and Dr. **Robert Butler**, who has concentrated on the planning, reasoning and communication skills of crows and ravens.

### On 'Oprah' this week

TONIGHT, Oprah Winfrey talks about "Living with Integrity. On Tuesday, Feb. 13, Dr. Phil helps couples caught between "Feuding in-Laws."

On Wednesday, Feb. 14, check out the latest good reads in Oprah's Book Club.

On Thursday, Feb. 15, take a hard look at the "Death Penalty Controversy." And on Friday, Feb. 16, **Jane Fonda** talks about her fight for women's rights in "Sanctioned Violence Against Women."

"Oprah!" is seen locally Monday to Friday at 1 p.m. on Star World.

# ABS-CBN trying to pirate 'Tsong' from GMA with fat fee

**SHOWBIZ TIDBITS**

*Leah Salterio*

IS IT true that ABS-CBN is wooing Parañaque Mayor **Joey Marquez** to take the place of **Willie Revillame** in the noontime show "Magandang Tanghali Bayan"?

Willie was kicked out of the show last week after ABS-CBN management found out he was hatching a plan to move to the rival network. It is said he was conniving with the two other "MTB" hosts – **Randy Santiago** and **John Estrada** – although Randy and John backed out before negotiations could even start.

We heard Joey is being offered a fat talent fee to complete the noontime triumvirate. But the comedian-turned-politician hasn't given his nod yet.

Being seen every day on TV can be a big advantage for Joey, who is running for his third term as Parañaque mayor in May. It can be a big campaign boost. That is, if he needs a campaign boost at all.

If he ever signs up with ABS-CBN, Joey will have to leave GMA, where he stars in the weekly sitcom "Kool Ka Lang." He has said that what he earns at GMA is equivalent to what three company presidents are getting in a month. That's easily six figures a month.

### Major changes at ABS-CBN

ANYTIME this week, ABS-CBN will announce major changes in its news department, after its lead talents and news anchors file their resignation to pursue their political plans.

**Noli de Castro**, who is said to be leading in the senatorial survey this early, will leave the daily early evening newscast "TV Patrol" and the weekly news magazine, "Magandang Gabi Bayan."

ABS-CBN is looking for a "suitable replacement" for Noli, according to **Patricia Daza**, ABS-CBN corporate communications officer.

Pat-P denies the rumor that **Karen Davila** will take Noli's place as solo anchor of "TV Patrol" and as vice president for dzMM. The talk caused some ABS-CBN insiders to raise their eyebrows, Karen being a newcomer to the network.

"Most likely, Karen will just be one of the talents in 'TV Patrol' after Noli leaves," Pat-P says. "The new program started that way, with **Mel Tiangco, Angelique Lazo**, Noli and **Frankie Evangelista.**"

However, Pat-P points out that it doesn't follow that Noli's replacement on "TV Patrol" will also be dzMM veep.

"Management really has to adjust accordingly because our major talents are entering politics," Pat-P says.

**Ted Failon** also resigned last week from "Hoy Gising" and dzMM.

This week, more talents are expected to leave the network. **Gilbert Remulla**, who is now with Pinoy Central, will run for Cavite congressman. Lawyer **Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan**, who hosts a daily morning radio show on dzMM and the weekly TV program "Barangay Dos," will try his luck in the Senate.

"Assignment" host **Teddy Boy Locsin** will run for congressman in Makati and **Alfredo Lim**, host of "Katapat," will go after the Manila mayor's seat.

If the ABS-CBN talents lose, Pat-P says they will have to renegotiate with management if they want to return to the network.

### 'Live a Star Weekend'

YOU don't have to be a star to experience the life of one. A new promo jointly launched by Lux Super Rich Shampoo and GMA Network gives young women a chance to enjoy the life of a celebrity even for a weekend.

"Live a Star Weekend" will make 30 young women experience the limelight and be seen on TV as they get serenaded by the male hosts of GMA's Sunday noontime show, "SOP."

The young women will also go on dinner dates with celebrities.

A weekend in Boracay with a two-night stay at Pink Patio Resort and round-trip cruise tickets for two from Super Ferry await the lucky girls.

During the weekend, the winners will be get two-night accommodations for two at Westin Philippine Plaza, where they will also be pampered with a full make-over, spa and beauty treatment at Head Zone salon. Those coming from outside Manila will be flown to the city via Air Philippines.

The girls will also get to party at Hard Rock Café and will be given P10,00 worth of new outfits and shopping money.

To join, write your complete name, age, address and signature on a piece of paper and enclose it in an envelope with six whole, empty sachets of Lux shampoo.

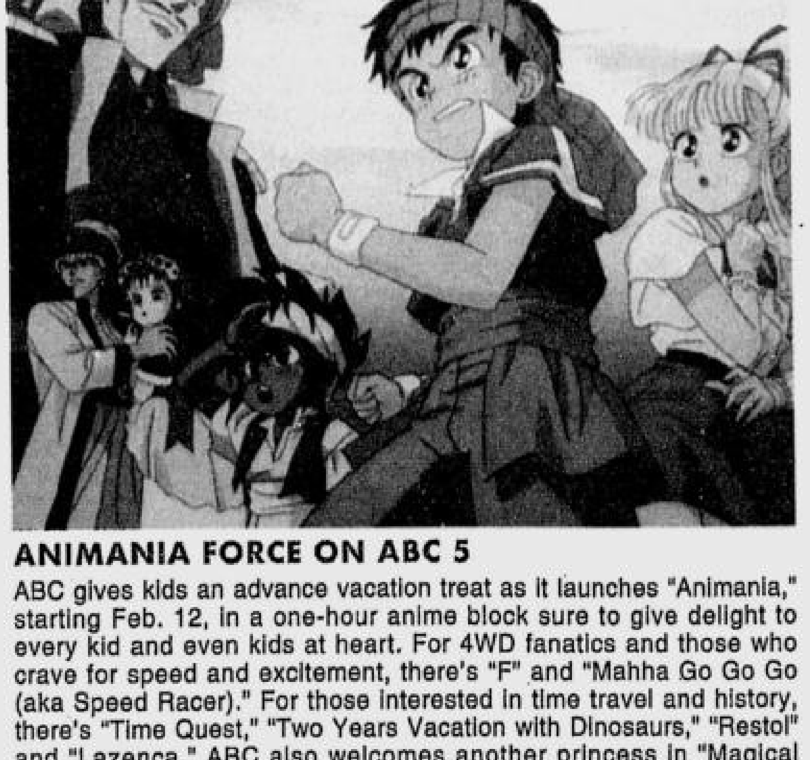
Present during the launch of "Live a Star Weekend" at Westin Philippine Plaza were **Ricky Santiago**, advertising and promotions manager of Hard Rock Philippines; **Carol Lozano**, marketing manager of WG&A Super Ferry; **Serafin Bautista**, senior vice president GMA sales and marketing; **Ed Sunico**, company media manager of Unilever Philippines; **Milagros Limgenco**, senior vice president for sales and marketing of Air Philippines; **Rica Peñalosa**, public relations manager of Westin Philippine Plaza; **Rowena Salao**, managing director of Head Zone, Westin branch; and **Leeds Trumpeta**, sales manager of Pink Patio.

### Successful career

LAST Friday on "Today with Kris," host **Kris Aquino** asked her guests – sexy actresses **Stella Ruiz, Ana Capri, Samantha Lopez** and **Piel Morena**, and ABS-CBN newscasters **Cherie Mercado** and **Alex Alikpala** — to make a choice between a successful career and a successful love life.

After the show, we sent Kris a text message and asked her to also make a choice. She readily said that she would rather have a successful career.

"It's attainable and with discipline, hard work and constant innovations, success is within reach," she said. "At least it's largely in my hands. Love life will need effort from two individuals. Sadly, I haven't found my match."



**ANIMANIA FORCE ON ABC 5**

ABC gives kids an advance vacation treat as it launches "Animania," starting Feb. 12, in a one-hour anime block sure to give delight to every kid and even kids at heart. For 4WD fanatics and those who crave for speed and excitement, there's "F" and "Mahha Go Go Go (aka Speed Racer)." For those interested in time travel and history, there's "Time Quest," "Two Years Vacation with Dinosaurs," "Restol" and "Lazenca." ABC also welcomes another princess in "Magical Stage Fancy Lala." For those interested in mythology there's "Pygmalio" and those who love soccer and sports will go gaga over "Dragon League."

# One-stop shop of fun and shows at The Venue

EVERYDAY is party time at The Venue, one of the hottest and the biggest entertainment spots in all of Davao City.

The Venue is at the corner of Quirino Avenue and Jacinto Extension. Situated in a 1,200-square-meter lot with a floor area of 1,800 sq m, it is a one-stop, well, venue, for music buffs, sports fans, food trippers or those who just want to have fun.

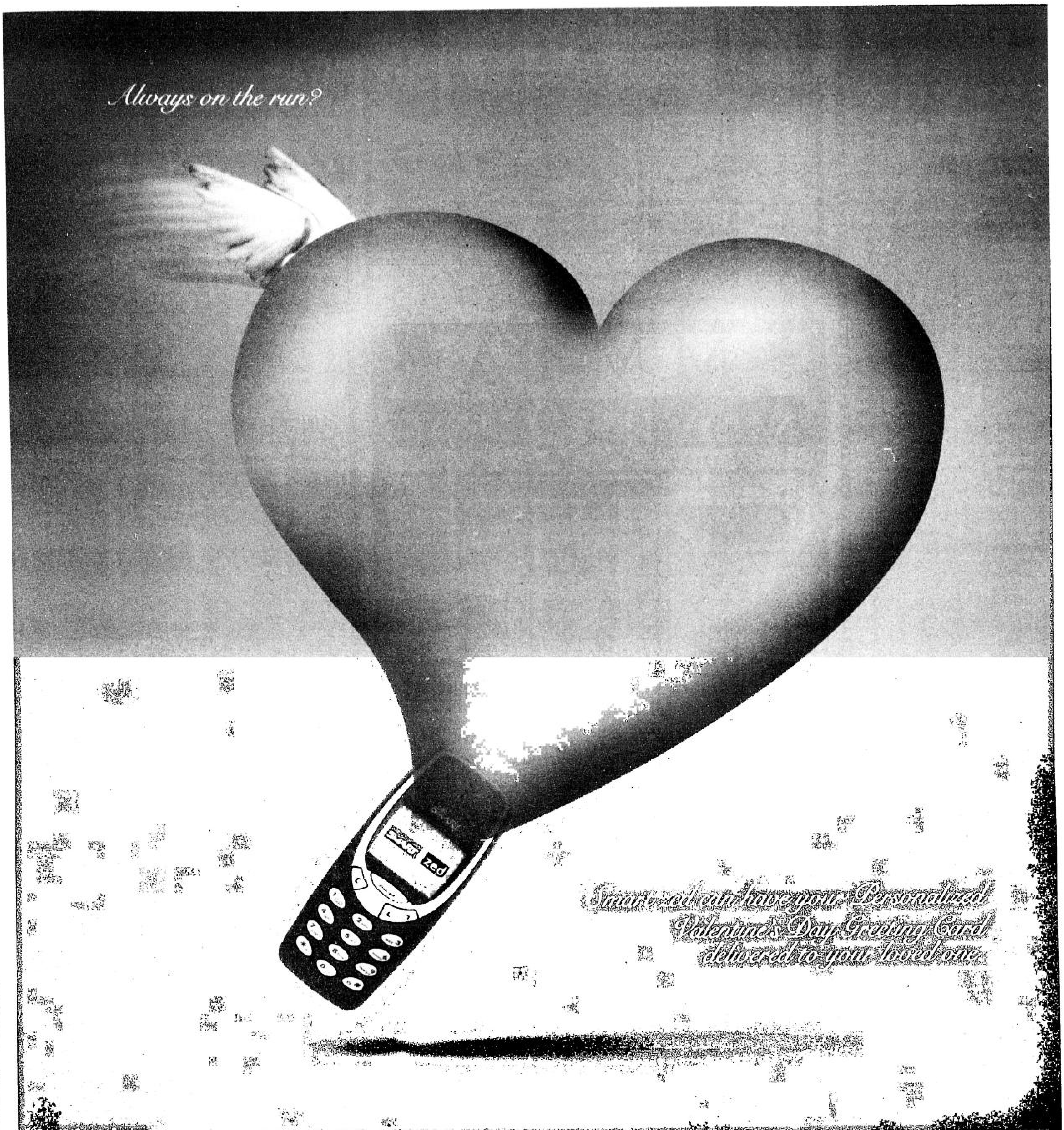
The sporty types can play either at one of the 16 billiard pools on the bar's second level, or at at the two snookers tables, four bumper pools, two shuffle boards and a gaming area.

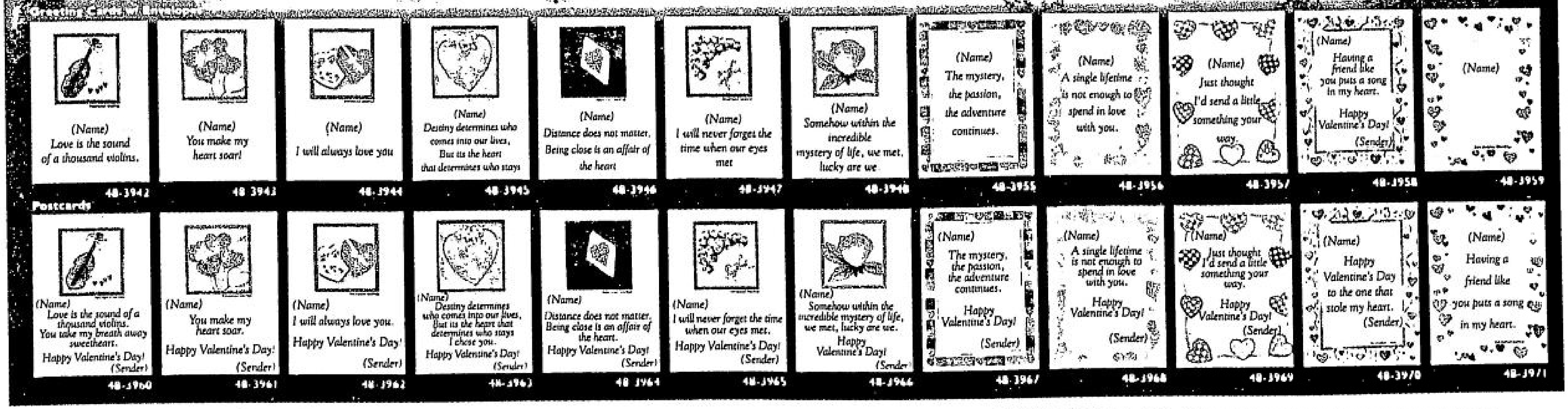
You can watch and rave at the live concerts made all the more special with a huge video wall, computer-generated lighting, and an impressive sound system.

Among the scheduled guest performers are Ara Mina, Gladys and the Boxers with K and Arnel Pineda on Feb. 14 in "The Beauty, The Boxers and The Man," and the March 2-3 concerts of Freestyle, backed by Davao-based bands.

The Venue, owned by couple Ronald and Gene Bangayan, also doubles as a convention center at daytime.

THE VENUE


Always on the run?
SMART zed
Smart zed can have your Personalized Valentine's Day Greeting Card delivered to your loved one



[illegible]

| Code | Card |
|---|---|
| 48-3942 | (Name)<br>Love is the sound of a thousand violins. |
| 48 3943 | (Name)<br>You make my heart soar! |
| 48-3944 | (Name)<br>I will always love you |
| 48-3945 | (Name)<br>Destiny determines who comes into our lives, But its the heart that determines who stays |
| 48-3946 | (Name)<br>Distance does not matter, Being close is an affair of the heart |
| 48-3947 | (Name)<br>I will never forget the time when our eyes met |
| 48-3948 | (Name)<br>Somehow within the incredible mystery of life, we met, lucky are we |
| 48-3955 | (Name)<br>The mystery, the passion, the adventure continues. |
| 48-3956 | (Name)<br>A single lifetime is not enough to spend in love with you. |
| 48-3957 | (Name)<br>Just thought I'd send a little something your way. |
| 48-3958 | (Name)<br>Having a friend like you puts a song in my heart.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3959 | (Name) |

Postcards

| Code | Card |
|---|---|
| 48-3960 | (Name)<br>Love is the sound of a thousand violins. You take my breath away sweetheart.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3961 | (Name)<br>You make my heart soar.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3962 | (Name)<br>I will always love you.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3963 | (Name)<br>Destiny determines who comes into our lives, But its the heart that determines who stays I chose you.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48 3964 | (Name)<br>Distance does not matter, Being close is an affair of the heart.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3965 | (Name)<br>I will never forget the time when our eyes met.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3966 | (Name)<br>Somehow within the incredible mystery of life, we met, lucky are we.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3967 | (Name)<br>The mystery, the passion, the adventure continues.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3968 | (Name)<br>A single lifetime is not enough to spend in love with you.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3969 | (Name)<br>Just thought I'd send a little something your way.<br>Happy Valentine's Day!<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3970 | (Name)<br>Happy Valentine's Day to the one that stole my heart.<br>(Sender) |
| 48-3971 | (Name)<br>Having a friend like you puts a song in my heart. |

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1. Key-in CARD, followed by the code number of your desired card design, recipient's name and complete address, your name and optional personalized message.
   *Example:* CARD48-3963#ANA SANTOS#5 ROSEVILLE ST., Q.C.#MARLON YU#I LOVE YOU.
   *Note: The whole message should be limited to 160 characters.*
2. Send to 230 and wait for confirmation.

**BILLING CHARGES:**

1. Greeting cards w/ envelopes are available at ₱70.00
2. Postcards are available at ₱55.00
3. All purchases will reflect in your next monthly celfone bill.

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## SM CINEMA GUIDE

SM Dial-A-Movie • Tel. 633-9999

### NOW SHOWING

**SM CITY BACOOR** 4173868

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOUNCE |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |

**SM CENTERPOINT** 7140822 · 7161418

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 3 | DTS | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 6 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOUNCE |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 10 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW** 9350749

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 4 | DOLBY DIGITAL | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 7 | DOLBY DIGITAL | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOUNCE |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | SYOTANG BAYAN |
| 11 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO |

**SM CITY MANILA** 5239240

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 2 | DOLBY DIGITAL | BOUNCE |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL | THE CONTENDER |
| 6 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | DUDE |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 11 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |

**GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR** 8820950

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 2 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |

**SM MEGAMALL** 6331901 · 6329401

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL | BOUNCE |
| 4 | DTS | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 7 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 8 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 11 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 12 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |

**SM CITY NORTH EDSA** 9295452

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOUNCE |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |
| 7 | DTS | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 8 | DOLBY DIGITAL | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 9 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | BALHIBONG PUSA |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 11 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | DUDE |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |

**SM SOUTHMALL** 8046888 · 8066782

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 7 | ULTRA SURROUND | BOUNCE |
| 8 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 9 | ULTRA SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 10 | ULTRA SURROUND | THE CONTENDER |

**TUTUBAN CENTER** 2514302

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 2 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | VITAL PARTS |
| 4 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |

**SM CEBU** 2313076

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | WHIPPED |
| 3 | ULTRA SURROUND | DUDE |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | MALIKOT ANG AGOS |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | RED PLANET |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | LITTLE NICKY |

**SM ILOILO** 3208422

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | MEET THE PARENTS |
| 3 | ULTRA SURROUND | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | RED PLANET |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | DUDE |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN |
| 7 | ULTRA SURROUND | REMEMBER THE TITANS |
| 8 | ULTRA SURROUND | DUWAG LANG SUMUSUKO |

**SM PAMPANGA** 7128015

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| 2 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | DUDE |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | BOOBA |
| 4 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| 5 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | TABI TABI PO |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |

Movies are subject to change without prior notice.

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## AYALA CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING

YOUR 24-HOUR LINK TO ALL AYALA CINEMAS 729 - 7777
reserve seats through www.sureseats.com

**GLORIETTA 1** formerly QUAD

1 VITAL PARTS
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 BOOBA
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

**GLORIETTA 4**

1 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2 BOUNCE — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 PROOF OF LIFE THX — In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 SPLENDOR (Phil. Premiere) — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 THE CONTENDER — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

**GREENBELT**

1 BOUNCE — In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 PROOF OF LIFE — In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**

1 PROOF OF LIFE THX — In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 VERTICAL LIMIT — In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 WHAT WOMEN WANT — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 BOUNCE — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 THE CONTENDER — In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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## MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

## MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) VERTICAL LIMIT
2 (SDDS) WHAT WOMEN WANT
3 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
4 GOLD (DTS) BOUNCE
5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE CONTENDER
6 GOLD (SDDS) CLOSED
7 GOLD (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 [illegible] VIRGIN WIFE
9 [illegible] BOOBA
10 [illegible] VITAL PARTS

**Pearl Plaza Cinemas**
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 TABI TABI PO
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS) BOOBA
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

**Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3**
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) PROOF OF LIFE
2 (DTS) RESERVE
3 IKA-7 GLORYA

**Masagana CINEMA**
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 IKA-7 GLORYA

**starmall Movies**
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 PROOF OF LIFE
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 IKA-7 GLORYA
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) VERTICAL LIMIT
5 VITAL PARTS

**Metropolis**
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 VITAL PART
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 VIRGIN WIFE
4 RESERVE
5 PROOF OF LIFE
6 VERTICAL LIMIT
7 BOOBA
8 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Uniwide Metromall**
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
1 HAPDI
2 MALICE 5
3 UNDERCOVER KID
4 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
5 –
6

**Uniwide Coastal Mall**
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
2 SAMBAHIN ANG PURI MO
3 MEN
4 ANINO

**Center Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SUGATANG PUSO
2 REMEMBER THE TITANS

**FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.**
tel 930.9515
1 RESERVE
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 IKA-7 GLORYA

**Spring**
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 VIRGIN WIFE
A IKA-7 GLORYA

**JC Cinema**
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 BOOBA
3 VIRGIN WIFE

**GOTESCO CINEMA**

**City**
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) VIRGIN WIFE
2 BOOBA
3 WHAT WOMEN WANT
4 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
5 BOUNCE
6 IKA-7 GLORYA
7 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
8 (SDDS) VITAL PARTS
9 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT

**Caloocan**
tel 362.3508
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 PROOF OF LIFE
[illegible] VITAL PART
5
6

**Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 VITAL PART
3 IKA-7 GLORYA
4 (SDDS) VIRGIN WIFE
5 BOOBA
6 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
7 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
8 TABI TABI PO
9 BOUNCE

**Commonwealth**
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 TABI TABI PO
4 BOUNCE
5 (SDDS) VIRGIN WIFE
6 BOOBA
7 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Ortigas**
tel 656.6795
1 BOOBA
2 BOUNCE
3 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN
5 (SDDS) VERTICAL LIMIT
6 (DOLBY) VIRGIN WIFE
7 (DOLBY) IKA-7 GLORYA

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 IKA-7 GLORYA

**Sampaquita**
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 IKA-7 GLORYA

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson IKA-7 GLORYA
Lords TABI TABI PO
Jennet IKA-7 GLORYA

**MARKETPLACE**
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 IKA-7 GLORYA
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 VIRGIN WIFE
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Prima**
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 IKA-7 GLORYA

**Super Cinerama**
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 PROOF OF LIFE
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 BOUNCE
4 SYOTA NG BAYAN
5 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Divisoria Mall**
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
4 TABI TABI PO
5 SYOTA NG BAYAN
6 PROOF OF LIFE

**Baclaran LRT Cinema**
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 IKA-7 GLORYA

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 VITAL PART
3 (DTS) VIRGIN WIFE

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 (DTS) VITAL PART
3 (DOLBY) PROOF OF LIFE
4 VIRGIN WIFE

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) VIRGIN WIFE
2 VITAL PARTS
3 SYOTA NG BAYAN
4 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) VITAL PARTS
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
4 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
5 MALIKOT ANG AGOS

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 VITAL PARTS

**Olivarez Los Baños**
tel (049) 536.5101
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 VITAL PARTS

**Olivarez Tagaytay**
tel (046) [illegible]
1 VERTICAL LIMIT
2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 TABI TABI PO

**Morales Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 PROOF OF LIFE
2 VERTICAL LIMIT
3 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 BOOBA
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Cabuyao**
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) VIRGIN WIFE
2 (DTS) VERTICAL LIMIT

**Fourstep**
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN

**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 MALIKOT ANG AGOS

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 SYOTA NG BAYAN
2 PROOF OF LIFE
3 LITTLE NICKY
4 TABI TABI PO

**Berma**
tel 879.2168
1
2

**CitiMall**
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 IKA-7 GLORYA
2 BOOBA
3 VIRGIN WIFE
4 VERTICAL LIMIT

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY SR) VERTICAL LIMIT
2 TABI TABI PO
3 DUDE
4 (DTS ES) WHAT WOMEN WANT

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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a special presentation

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# 'Live Show' premieres tonight at UP Film Center

REGAL Entertainment's much ballyhooed film, the Jose Javier Reyes-helmed "Live Show," is set for a special advance screening date, 6 tonight at the UP Film Center.

The year's highly anticipated industry event marks a milestone for a film predicted to gain as much impressive box-office momentum as well as high industry interest as it opens on a Valentine's Day playdate.

"Live Show" world-premiered to awestruck European audiences at the 50th Berlinale in Berlin, Germany, where the film figured as one of the most talked-about among the participating Asian entries.

A deeply moving drama about lives lived in the gutters of sleaze and despair and at the same time a harrowing expose' of wretched realities plaguing the exploited, "Live Show" is a timely indictment of festering present-day circumstances bedeviling Philippine society.

Visualized with a stunning imagery of life, love, death and hope for rebirth, "Live Show" tells its story from the point of view of Rolly, a *torero* who narrates his life story in a docu-drama style.

"Live Show" gathers local filmdom's most compelling performers and the era's more important stars on the rise, Ana Capri, Klaudia Koronel, Paolo Rivero, Hazel Espinosa, Marcus Madrigal, Simon Ibarra, Oliver Hartmann and Daria Ramirez.

The stars will grace the UP Film Center screening tonight.

## Side A performs at Suburbia

THE LOCAL Landscape rule Suburbia in Malate anew this February when Side A plays nothing but your type of music tonight, Feb. 12, while Judith Banal with Sketches of Blue (SOB) strums for audience requests on Feb. 19 and 26.

Tuesdays are hot and heavy with dance music from Passage, while Side A goes back-to-back with Pido with Tall on Feb. 14.

Seventh Soul and Pido with Take One take center stage Feb. 21 and 28.

Real Groove performs Feb. 15. Escape and Freeverse keep the scene alive on Fridays.

The weekend hype continues Saturday with Elements back to back with Bulk, Feb. 17 and 24.

Suburbia is along M. Adriatico st., Malate, Manila.

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| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | WHAT WOMAN WANT |
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| ROBEN | VIRGIN WIFE |
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| TIMES | BEDAZZLED / THE WATCHER |
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| ACT-2 | ANAK NG KANO |
| ACT-3 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| ACT-4 | TURN ON |
| CORONET-2 | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| QUEZON-1 | VIRGIN WIFE |
| REMAR | VIRGIN WIFE |
| REMAR-2 | SYOTA NG BAYAN |
| **CUBAO** | |
| OCEAN SUPERAMA | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| OCEAN CINEMA-A | HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO |
| OCEAN CINEMA-B | BUKID AY BASA |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
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| CINEMA-6 | BALAHIBONG PUSA |
| CINEMA-7 | MALIKOT ANG AGOS |
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| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | VERTICAL LIMIT |
| CINEMA-12 | THE CONTENDER |
| CINEMA-14 | VITAL PARTS |
| CINEMA-15 | BOUNCE |
| **LORES** | |
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LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

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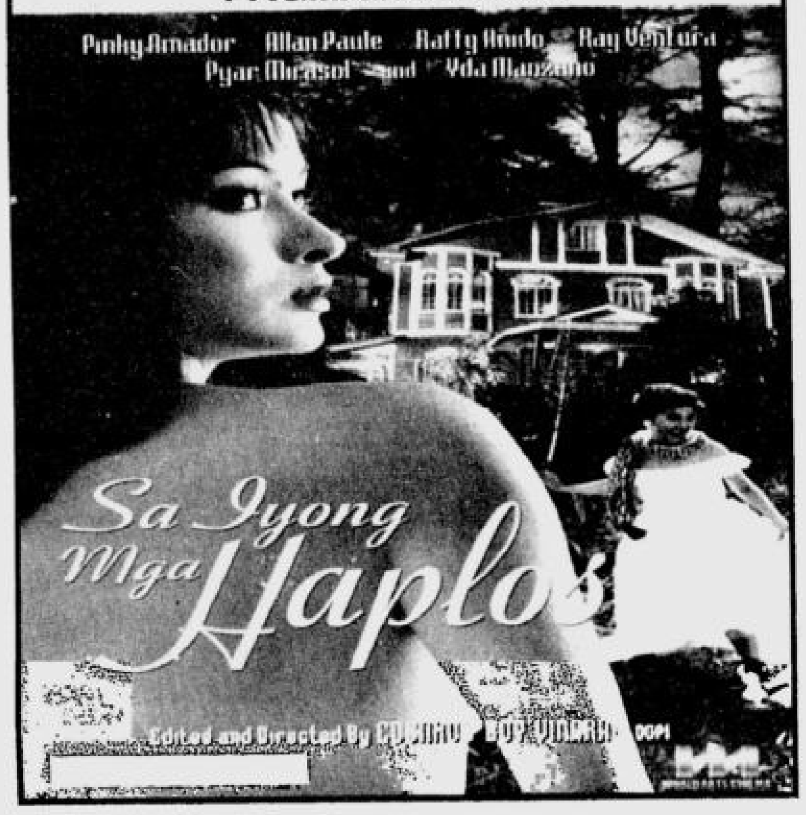
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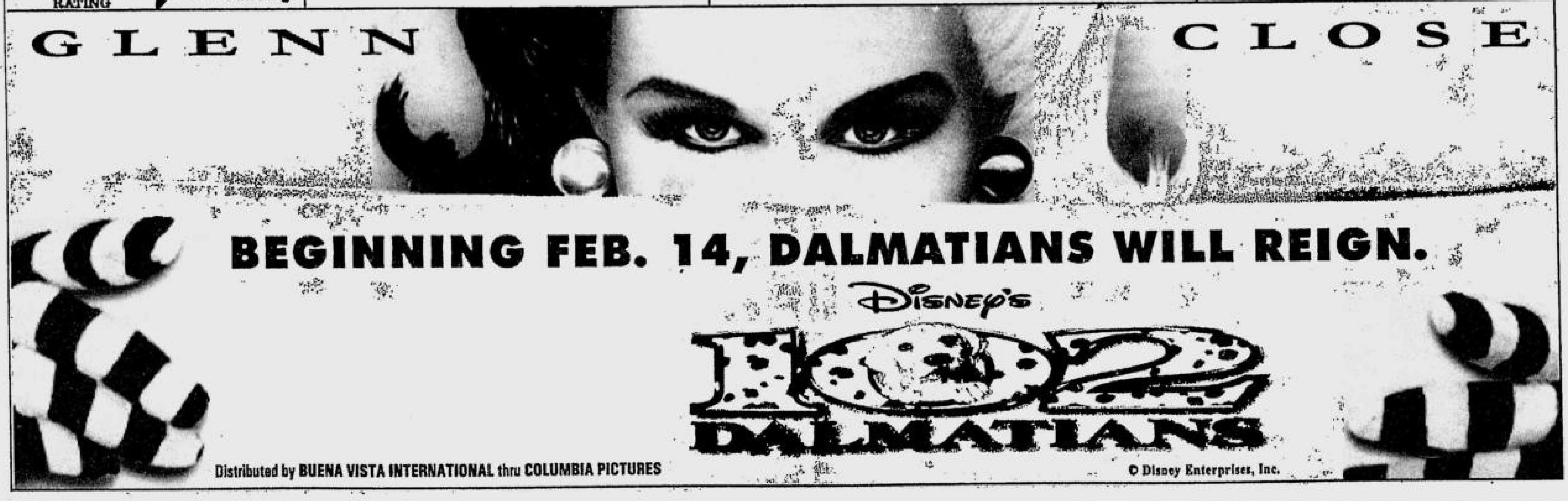
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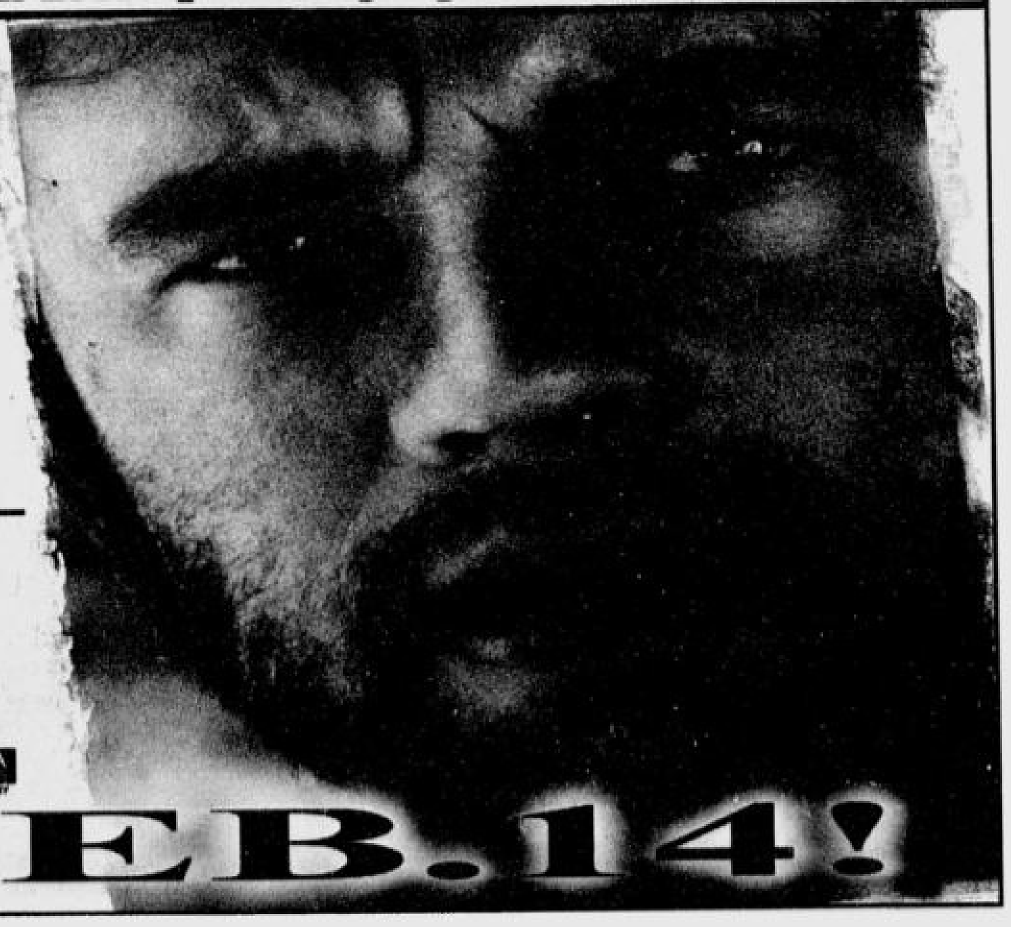

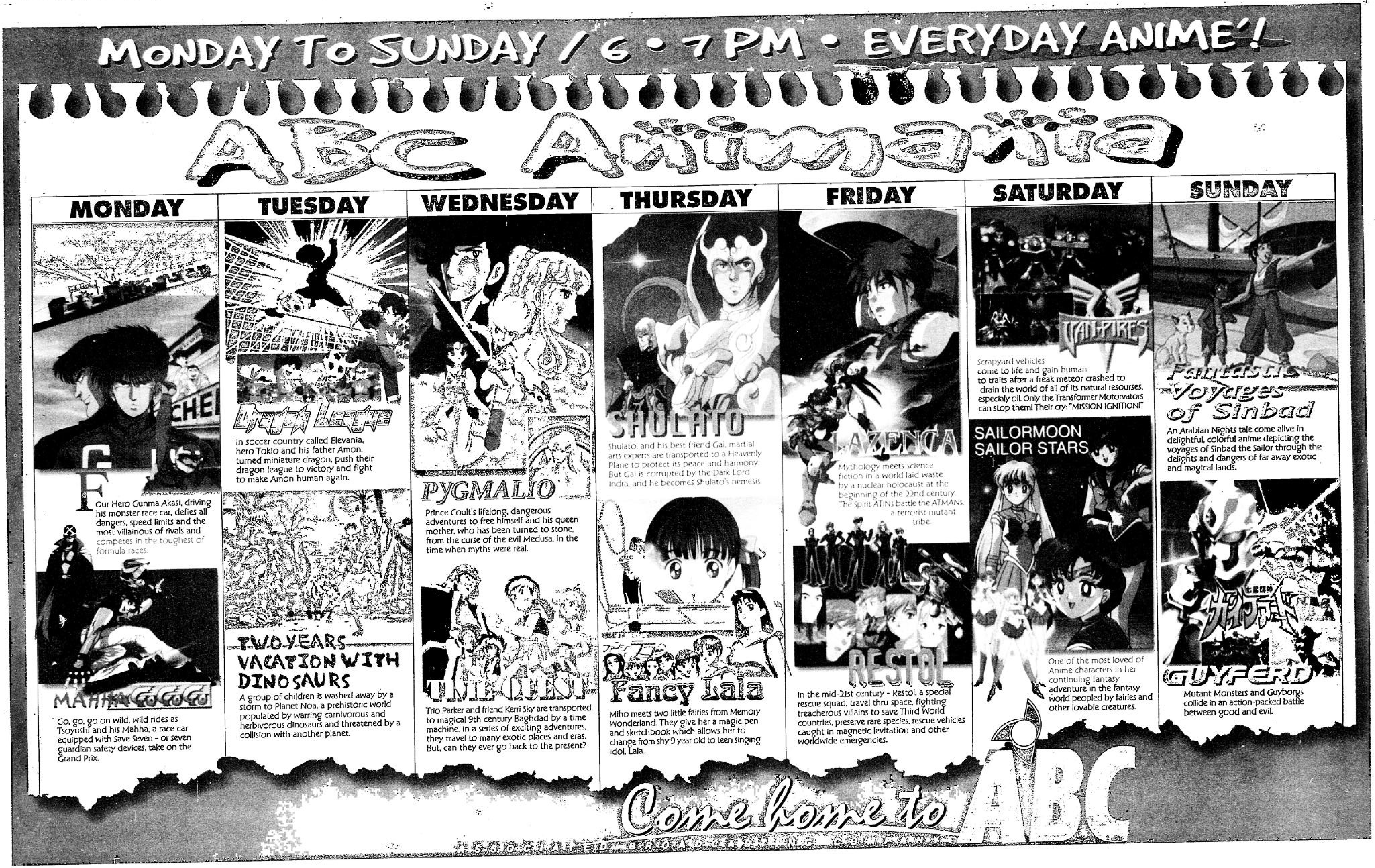

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Prince Coult's lifelong, dangerous adventures to free himself and his queen mother, who has been turned to stone, from the curse of the evil Medusa, in the time when myths were real.

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# Stable interest rates, stronger peso seen

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

BRIGHT prospects await the local financial markets this week, with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas projected a half-percentage point decline in the 91-day treasury bill yield today, a further improvement in the value of the peso this week, and further policy interest rate cuts in the near term.

"I think the T-bill rate could go down by 50 basis points. The peso would be stable with room for further appreciation," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said. The peso closed at 48.20 against the dollar last Friday.

As the central bank's overnight rates go down by another half-a-percentage point today and be back to pre-"Juetengate" levels, the BSP governor said it was possible to bring down the key rates to a single digit in the near future depending on two factors.

Buenaventura said monetary authorities would keenly monitor any improvement in inflation and further rate reduction by the US Federal Reserve as the two main triggers for another cut in the BSP's rates.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said he hoped that treasury bill rates would go down to 10 percent and possibly even to single-digit levels within the year from 10.683 percent last Monday for the benchmark borrowing rate.

"The best way to revive the economy is to promote an interest rate level that businesses can afford, that would allow them to put up new businesses or expand existing ones," Romulo said.

As credit flows aggressively to businesses, more jobs will be created and the economy will grow. The business community, Romulo said, also expected a level playing field, predictability and transparency in government policies, and efficient state agencies.

Buenaventura said the peso should further improve as inflow both from direct and portfolio investments start coming in.

"Outflows have definitely stopped and the expectation is that interest rates abroad would go down some more," he said.

Short-term interest rates in the United States could be reduced further by the US Federal Reserve on or before March 31, the next Federal Open Markets Committee meeting.

"Interest rates would remain stable for the meantime until the Fed moves or inflation begins to come down. We intend to keep a healthy differential with the US," the BSP chief said.

The BSP uses overnight rates as a tool to maintain price stability and to help ward off volatility in the peso-dollar market.

At the height of the political crisis during the administration of former President Estrada, the risk factor in the exchange rate grew to P8 from about P2 to P4 after the juetengate scandal erupted in early October. This amount represents the portion of the exchange rate attributable to political concerns.

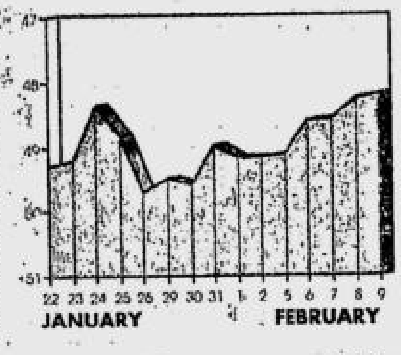
Buenaventura said the peso should get back to maintaining a P3 to P4 difference over the Thai baht.

STABLE/ B6

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



**Peso-Dollar Rate**

₱48.20 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2001

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The US dollar was trading at 116.58 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2001

**GOLD:$260.10/260.60**
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### STOCK MARKET

## Stocks seen to rise

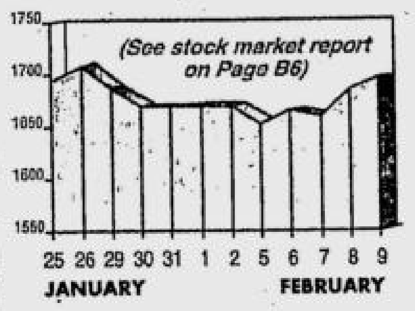
A BULLISH week is in store for local stocks as market players nibble on selective issues.

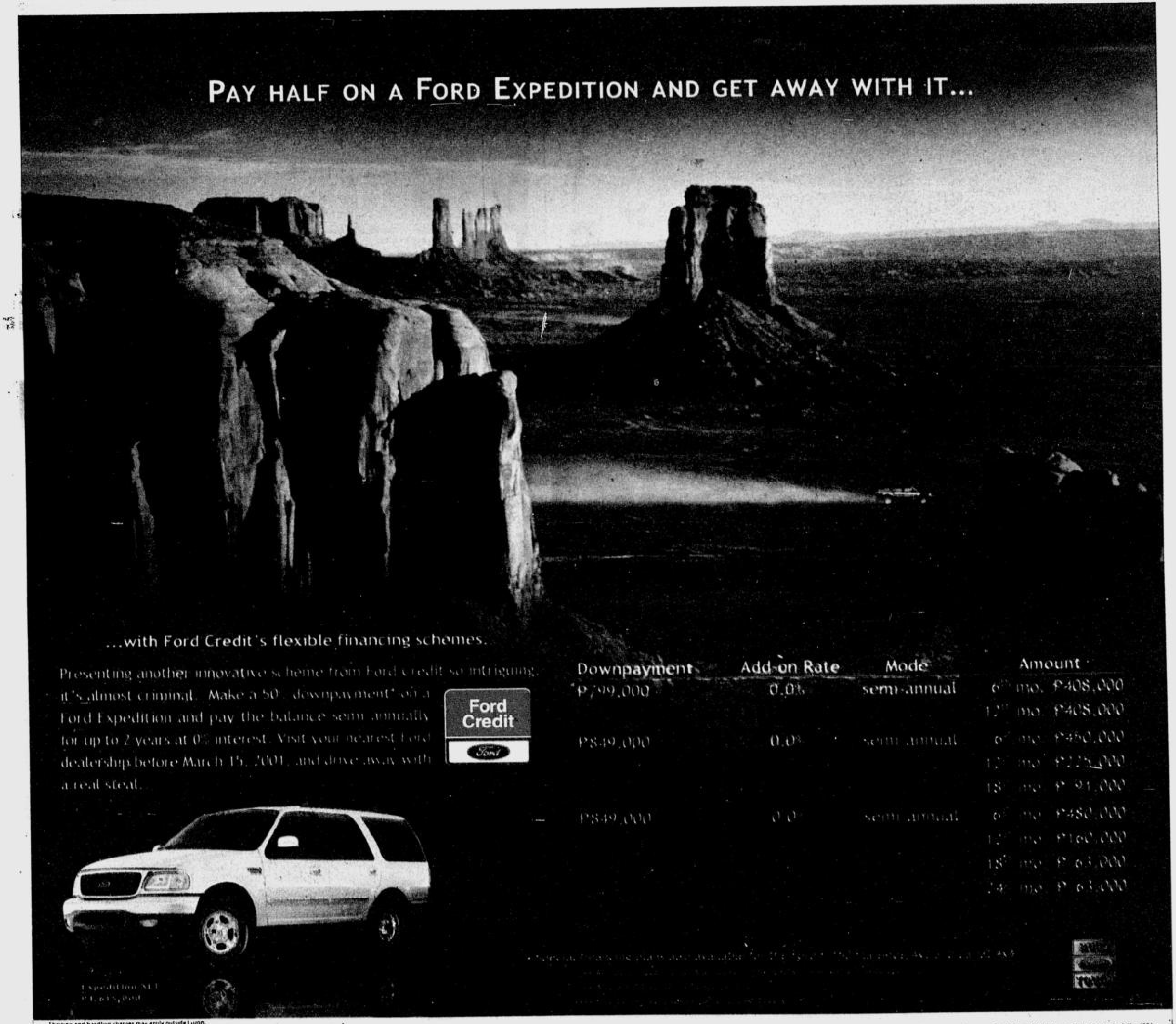
A major trigger for the continued buying momentum has been the improving economic outlook ever since the Macapagal administration took over last month.

Stock analysts said a major catalyst that brought cheers to the market was the government's

STOCKS/ B6

**PSE Composite Index**

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# Vehicle sales down 17.4%

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

AUTOMOTIVE sales dropped sharply in January this year as last month's turbulent political situation dampened interest in the purchase of new cars and commercial vehicles.

A report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers Association of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) showed that industry sales fell 17.4 percent to 5,736 units in January from 6,948 units a year ago. This is the fourth consecutive month that sales have declined from year-ago levels.

Hardest hit was the passenger car segment whose sales dropped 32 percent to 1,613 units last month from 2,366 units a year ago. Bearing the brunt of nose-diving sales were pacesetters Honda Cars Philippines Inc. (down 53 perçent to 453 units) and Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. (down 43 percent to 310). Honda sold only 16 Civic cars as buyers waited for the introduction of the new version of the popular sedan this month.

Sales of commercial vehicles also slipped by 10 percent to 4,123 units in January from 4,582 units a year ago.

Executives of automotive companies blamed the stormy political front for the industry's poor sales. Estrada was booted out of Malacañang on Jan. 20 by the People Power II and businessmen were still waiting how newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo would perform.

With investor confidence steadily building up under a new administration, assemblers are expecting brighter prospects for the industry this year with turnover projected to grow between 10 percent and 15 percent from last year. Campi earlier reported that industry sales jumped 12.8 percent to 83,949 units in 2000 from 74,414 units in 1999.

Toyota opened the year still ahead of the pack with sales of 1,551 units or market share of 27 percent. Mitsubishi Motor Philippines Corp. was second with 1,315 units sold (23 percent). Honda was third with 625 units sold (11 percent) and Isuzu Philippines Corp. was fourth with 605 units sold (10.5 percent).

# The hijacking of GSIS

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

*Honesto C. General*

WHILE everybody was celebrating the downfall of Joseph Estrada, the Government Service Insurance System was hijacked.

Even before she had warmed her chair at Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed what's-his-name as president/general manager of GSIS. Why the hurry? There was no management crisis at GSIS. In fact, GSIS, was running smoothly. Did the presidential search committee have anything to do with the choice? Apparently not. The appointment smacks of patronage politics through and through.

I can appreciate why GSIS is such a prized plum. By any yardstick, GSIS is huge. It has assets of P200 billion, investments of P40 billion. On its payroll are 3,600 employees in the home office and 41 branches all over the country.

GSIS was a milking cow during the dictatorship. After the 1986 revolution, Sonny Belmonte became president/general manager of what turned out to be a bankrupt firm. In a few years, he turned GSIS around and turned over to Malacañang P300 million in profits.

GSIS is the country's largest life insurance company. By law, it insures every last one of 1,500,000 government employees. Last year, it collected P36 billion in life premiums. It provides a raft of benefits to members: disability and sickness income benefits, survivorship and death benefits, unemployment benefits. As part of its social aspect, GSIS grants small salary loans to members. Finally, it provides pensions to some 200,000 retirees.

GSIS is also one of the country's largest non-life companies. By law again, it has the absolute monopoly of insuring government properties. Last year, it collected P1.5 billion in non-life premiums.

By the very nature of its insurance operations, GSIS holds for its members huge sums of money in reserve. These funds must be poured into investments that "shall satisfy the requirements of liquidity, safety, security and yield in order to ensure the actuarial solvency of the funds of GSIS." As in any insurance company, investment of funds is a major GSIS activity.

Under the GSIS Act of 1997 (RA 8291), the president/general manager "shall be a person with management and investment expertise necessary for the effective performance of his duties and functions." Also, he shall "direct and supervise the administration and operations of the GSIS."

The job is juicy. The salary and perks are nothing to sneeze at. Besides, as a board member of San Miguel Corp. representing the interests of GSIS, he pockets the director's fees, which I hear are quite generous, and gets a lifetime supply of Magnolia ice cream. (By the way, he should turn over those fees to GSIS but he can keep the ice cream.)

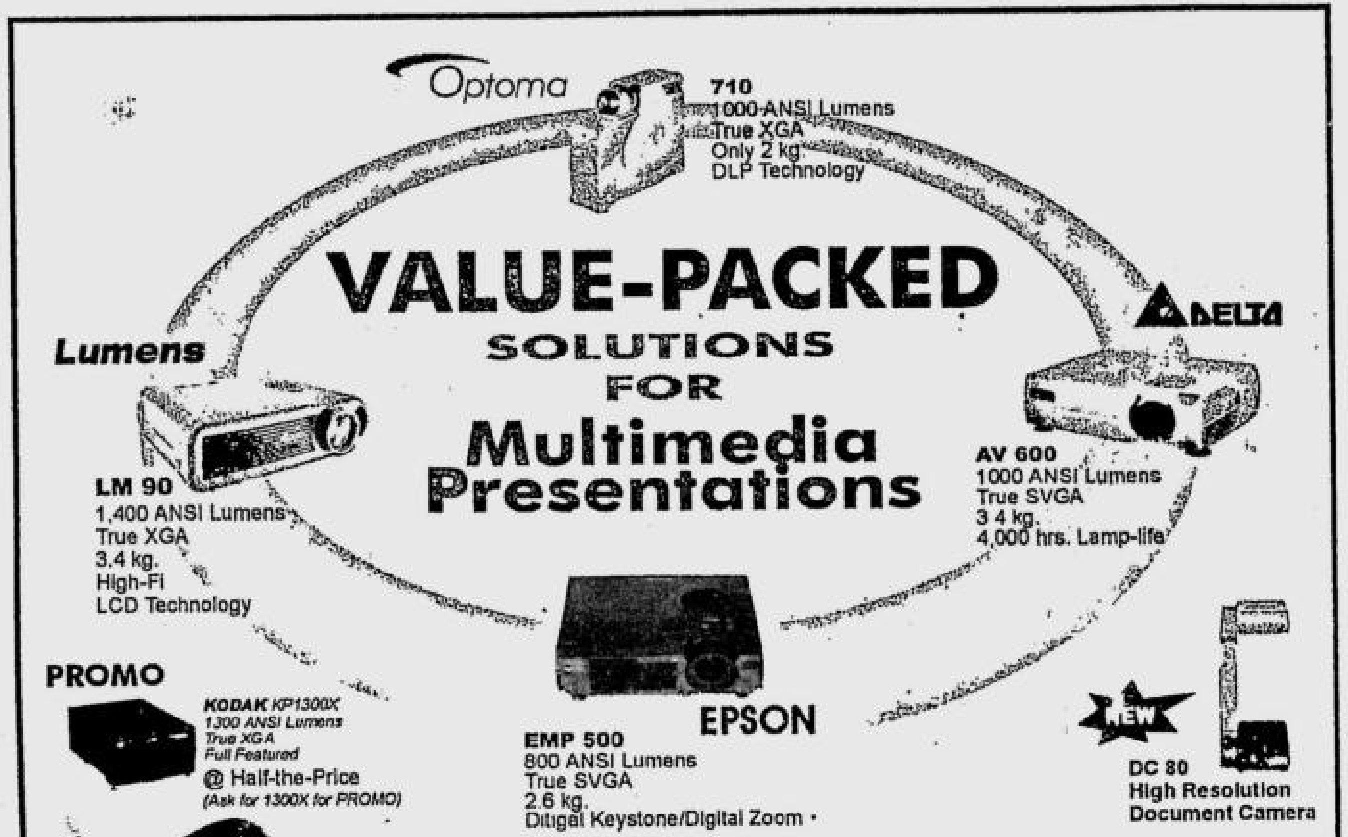
With the enormity of the job, very few insurance practitioners in the private sector will qualify. And so, what is so outstanding about Winston F. Garcia?

Don't get me wrong. I don't know him from Adam. In fact, he looks like an all-around nice guy. He is a lawyer by profession. Let us not hold this against him. Two of the best general managers GSIS ever had, Sonny Belmonte and the late Ramon Diaz, were lawyers.

Garcia was elected member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in 1986 and held the position until 1995. He chaired the Committee on Good Government, Committee on Law and Ordinances and the Executive Committee on Anti-Graft and Corruption. He finished his law degree at the San Beda College of Law (the snickers you hear are from Ateneans) and has a degree of Philosophy from the University of Sto. Tomas.

A well-educated politician, to be sure, but Winston F. Garcia does not have the qualifications of a president and general manager as the law requires. He has not ran even an insurance agency or pawnshop.

Garcia's appointment should be recalled. Government employees deserve a break.



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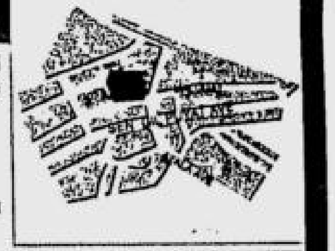

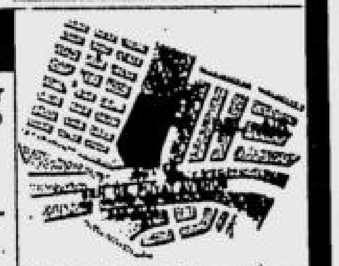

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**COCKTALES**

## Erap's US alibi

*By Victor C. Agustin*

ON HIS last day in New York during his US visit last year, Joseph Estrada had been scheduled to see an eye doctor for a check-up and possible operation for his glaucoma-related problems.

But due to all-night carousing of the presidential party at the Waldorf Astoria the night before—local viewers got a glimpse of the partying and drinking in TV and news reports filed by the Malacañang press corps—an over-exerted Erap as usual failed to wake up for the mid-morning appointment and so the medical examination had to be cancelled.

We recounted this anecdote since Estrada, now reduced to a whimpering slob in his Greenhills home, is laying the predicate for an American trip, using his eye ailment as alibi.

Why Estrada needs to fly to the United States for a routinary operation his spin doctors would not dare explain, specially since his eye doctor, Boston-based Felipe Tolentino, is now in town, having arrived over the weekend.

Tolentino, whose clients include the Marcoses and the Lopezes, could very well perform the operation here, if Estrada does not trust the local doctors.

Even more, Tolentino's New York colleague, Dr. John Park, whose Queens clinic Estrada was supposed to check into for that aborted New York appointment, is currently in town as well, quietly performing charity operations for the annual SaveSight Mission along

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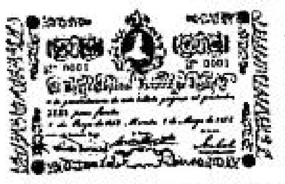

...that the first batch of bank notes issued by the first bank in the Philippines, originally called *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2*, totaled 2,350 pieces (under different denominations) with a total value equivalent to 100,000 *pesos fuertes*?

...that these bank notes comprised of 1,000 pieces of 10 *pesos fuertes* (PF), 600 pieces of 25 PF, 500 pieces of 50 PF and 250 pieces of 200 PF?

...that the first deposit accepted by the bank was an amount equivalent to 3,000 *pesos fuertes* from a client named Fulgencio Barrera on May 4, 1852?

...that the first borrowing client of *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2* was a Chinese named Tadian, for whom the bank discounted a promissory note amounting to 10,000 *pesos fuertes* on May 1, 1852?

...that the amount lent to Tadian represented 10 percent of the value of the entire notes printed by the bank as of that time?

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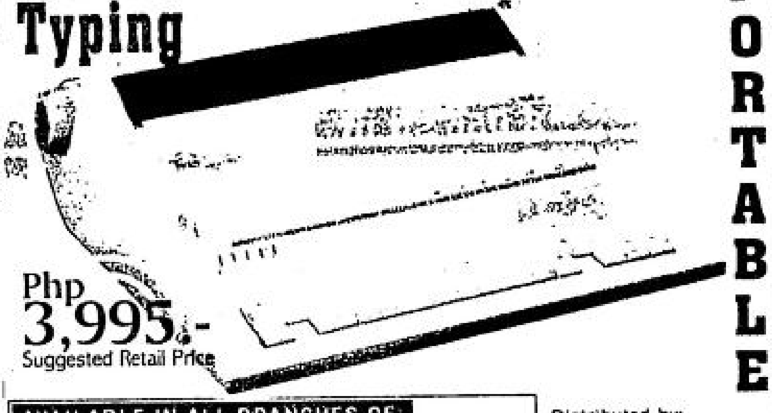

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# Gov't debt up 21% at ₱2.15T in end-Dec.

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S debt swelled by P381.22 billion or 21 percent to P2.156 trillion in end-December from its year-ago level due to the depreciation of the peso and the government's massive borrowings to finance the budget deficit.

Documents showed that the total domestic liabilities of the government rose to P1.068 trillion last year, up 92 percent or P89.796 billion from the 1999 level. Local debts accounted for 49.54 percent of the government's total debt stock.

Foreign obligations also soared by P291.422 billion in end-December to P1.088 trillion from P796.95 billion a year ago. In US dollars, the country's foreign debts as of end-December rose to $21.789 billion from $19.8 billion in 1999. Foreign debts accounted for 50.45 percent of the total debt stock.

Foreign currency-denominated sovereign securities issued last year reached to $8.56 billion, up $2.539 from $6.021 billion in the previous year. In peso terms, the national government issued securities in dollars worth P427.579 billion, almost double of the P242.352 billion issued in 1999.

The bonds issued last year included a $1.3-billion global bonds issued in March and another $300-million Samurai bonds in August.

Contributing to the significant increase in the country's debts last year was the peso's fall to an average of 49.95 to $1 last year compared to an average of 40.25 to $1 in 1999.

Based on government computations, foreign debt servicing goes up by P7 billion for every P1 depreciation of the local currency versus the greenback. A one-percent rise in the 91-day treasury bill rate could increase the cost of domestic borrowings by P9 billion.

Direct obligations of the national government last year also soared by P195.991 billion from year-ago level.

Borrowings of government agencies accounted for P1.696 trillion last year from P1.499 trillion the previous year while loans incurred by the national government but was lent out to government-owned and controlled corporations reached P569.99 billion from P498.399 billion.

The national government also issued more government securities last year to help finance its budget gap that reached P136.1 billion.

The government also issued shorter-term, higher-yielding instruments called cash management bills in the third week of October to the third week of November. This is to stem capital flight that occurred at the height of the political uncertainty during the period.

The government borrows about P7 billion weekly through treasury bills and bonds.

"The growth in the national government's debt stock was caused by the movement of the peso-dollar exchange rate and our inability to borrow from the foreign market to bridge our substantial revenue shortfall," said the national treasury.

Former National Treasurer Leonor Briones said the debt burden last year was handled well by the government despite the peso fall and the huge deficit.

# Romulo questions legality of new privatization body

FINANCE Secretary Alberto Romulo has questioned the legality of the executive order issued by former President Estrada creating a new body that replaced the Committee on Privatization.

This, however, should not stall the privatization of state assets which the government hopes would generate for the national coffers P7 to P10 billion this year.

The government aims to sell this year its 90-percent stake in Philippine National Construction Corp., the assets of International Broadcasting Co., a 10-percent stake in Manila Electric Co., a prime property in Makati which is presently occupied by the International School and the Al-Amanah Bank.

PNCC and IBC-13 were placed on the auction block late last year but the bidding failed to attract buyers.

"I want to see whether the EO is valid. Why was it not passed through legislation. We are asking the DOJ for a legal opinion," said Romulo who expects the Department of Justice's opinion within the week.

The inter-agency Committee on Privatization and the Asset Privatization Trust were allowed by law to operate until the end of November 2000.

The COP is the privatization body while the APT is the disposal entity.

In 1999, when the terms of both agencies were supposed to have expired, Congress had extended their terms until Nov. 30, 2000. The previous administration thought another extension was no longer possible.

An EO was issued by Malacañang in December creating the State Privatization Council to replace the COP.

The new inter-agency body, like the COP, is chaired by the finance secretary and its members include the heads of the National Economic Development Authority, Department of Budget and the APT.

"I was the author of the extension of COP and I am not sure whether a mere EO would suffice in extending its life or in creating a new entity," said Romulo.

He believed the new government would be able to dispose of the assets that were earlier snubbed or undervalued by bidders. "These are good properties," he quipped.

Last year, the government had hoped to raise P22 billion from the privatization of some of its assets. As of end-December, however, proceeds from the privatization program reached less than P5 billion.

None of the big-ticket items it had planned to sell was actually sold. PNB was sold to Lucio Tan's Starbuck Equities Corp. last July 19 but in September, the taipan had reneged on his commitment to produce a letter-of-credit that would assure his payment for the shares he was buying.

*Clarissa S. Batino*

# Cocktales

(From page B3)

with Columbia University doctors Antonio Gonzales, Linsy Farris, and Simone Finzi.

What we are trying to say is, Estrada does not need to fly to the United States to see his eye doctors because his US eye doctors are all here.

## Nani's new clients

HARDLY had Hernando Perez warmed his seat as justice secretary when who comes knocking at his law firm's door but the Jaime Dichaves-nominees in the sequestered Philcomsat/POTC board.

These are the very same nominees that are now fighting Benito "Bomboy" Araneta, Manuel Nieto and Ronaldo Salonga out of Philcomsat/POTC, using Erap's favorite telecom supplier Jaime Dichaves and Erap personal lawyer Edward Serapio as battering ram.

Not only has Balgos and Perez law office accepted the Dichaves allies—one of whom is a lawyer indicted by the BIR for tax evasion—as client, one Balgos and Perez associate now even works full-time for the Dichaves board, alongside with a former associate of the Fortun Narvasa law firm.

What is that again about birds of a feather . . . ?

## Telephony aside

THE RURAL telephony program, as revised by Communications Undersecretary Agustin Bengzon, is a laudable, motherhood project, much like the electricity-to-the-barrios program.

Our objection to the Bengzon plan is how government money would again be used to fund private sector initiatives, with the government even guaranteeing private sector loans and payment of suppliers' contracts.

Given the worrisome deficit, is the new government again willing to subsidize a project the way it did to PAL's missionary routes or now the Metrostar Express?

## Short takes

- MANUEL "Dondi" Teehankee, a bar topnotcher like his late father Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee, has been appointed justice undersecretary.

- THE first name of Energy Undersecretary Bomasang is Rufino, not Mario as reported on Friday.

## Heard through the grapevine

A LEADING socialite/columnist dispensing advice on family matters is suing her septuagenarian mother out of their modest ancestral home in old Makati.

What is tragic is that the retired mother has no other home while her daughter now lives in a sprawling hacienda (not to mention Dasmariñas Village), where race horses and prized cocks are cared and doted upon more than humans.

*(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

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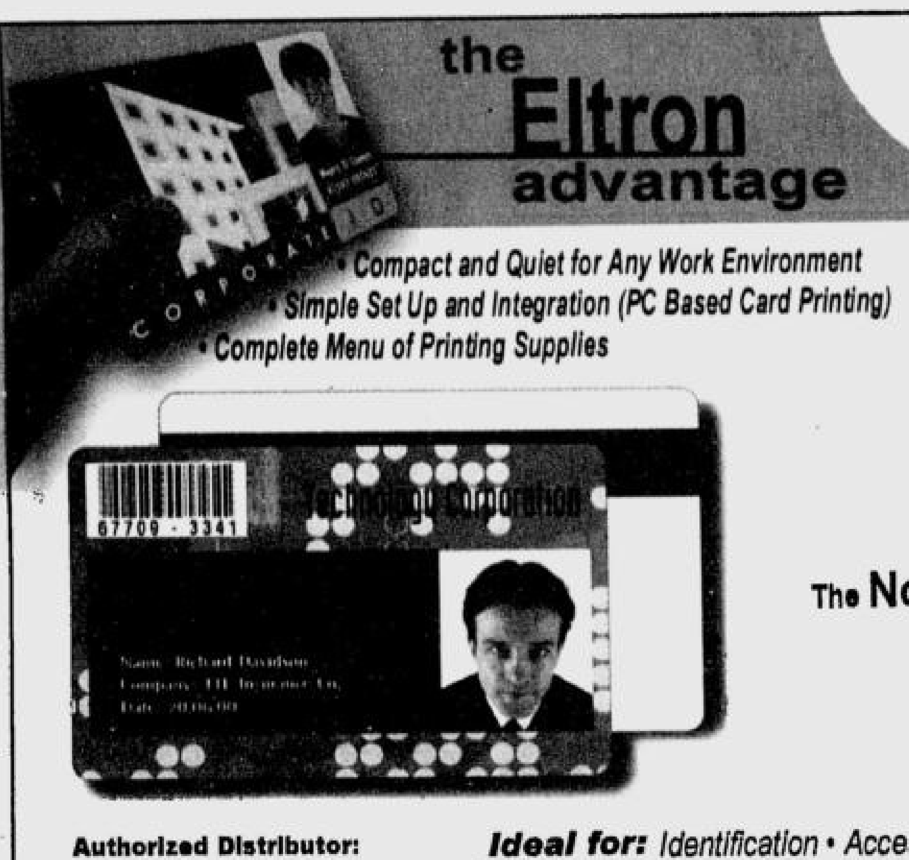

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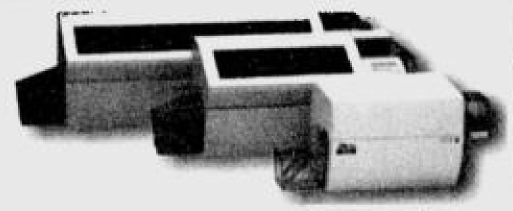

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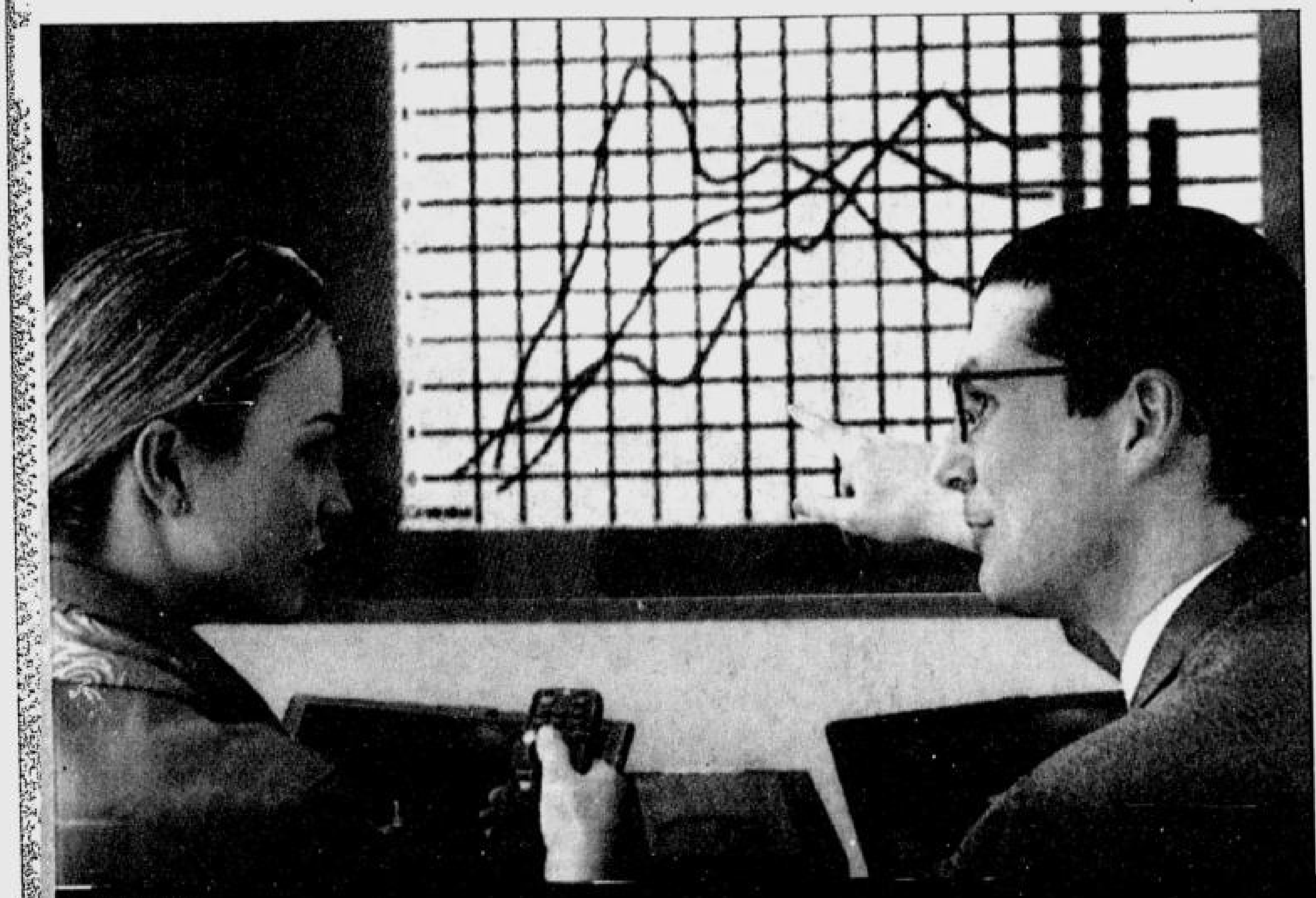

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# Anastasios Maniatis

**ON THE MONEY**
*John Mangun*

THE STOCK market performed to expectations last week, closing Friday on a very strong note. I anticipate that prices will pull back now that we have come close to the 1,700-1,750 resistance area. Do not be discouraged. This is what is supposed to happen. I would be selling all short-term holdings if and when the 1,750 area is reached.

There is enough skepticism about stock prices to keep this mini rally in place. As long as there is caution in the minds of most investors, the outlook is very favorable. In fact, I hope that the market does fall dramatically from the 1,700-1,750 window, scaring some players out of the market. A few dashed hopes would shorten the time frame for the beginning of the strong rally I see on the horizon.

One positive sign is that my friend and mentor Franky, is almost starting to agree with me. His language ("I think you might be right") about my analysis is changing. When Franky is convinced that this is not a trap, we will definitely be in the midst of a good, long-term rally. Franky is a "technician" although his technical bias is slightly different from mine. He is an advocate of a system called Elliot Wave Theory. I prefer to use chart patterns to give me a picture of where prices are headed. He also uses yoga and meditation to enhance his technical studies while I favor examining the entrails of chickens under a full moon. Always remember that studying the market is an art and not a science.

The two major corporate stories of last week are confusing to me. PLDT's (TEL) decision to buy television network GMA has been in the works for some time. It had been rumored that this was a personal decision of PLDT's chair. As a business venture, it does not seem to fit with PLDT. Of course, television does fall under the broad category of communication like telephones. But taking a majority interest in GMA means that PLDT will have to decide the focus of GMA.

Television is content oriented, not the infrastructure business as is PLDT. The idea that somehow PLDT can use this for a convergence of communication just does not make sense here in the Philippines. Cable is crucial to high speed Internet delivery and PLDT already owns a cable company. However, airwave broadcast is an entirely different matter.

From an economic viewpoint, PLDT is paying a lot for GMA and will infuse another P1 billion into the company next year. As a private company, revenue and income numbers are not available for GMA, so maybe PLDT knows something that the stock market does not. Nevertheless, I cannot see any direct benefit at this point to PLDT.

The other story centered on San Miguel (SMC). It is unfortunate that the ownership of SMC is still unresolved through three administrations and countless years of legal wrangling. Aside from the ownership dispute, it is undeniable that the company has flourished under the chairmanship and direction of Mr. Cojuangco. The turnaround in the last two years is amazing. Regardless of who owns the disputed shares, the performance of SMC has never been any better from a shareholder's point of view.

I can find no economic fault with any of the major decisions made since Cojuangco took the chair. International operations are very favorable. The company is rich with cash. The repurchase of Coca-Cola Philippines makes right a terrible decision from the past. Let me give you two other examples of bad decisions under government control and proper decisions under Cojuangco. The decision for San Miguel to tie up with Nestle was delayed and delayed. When the approval was made, the cost of getting in was too high. For several years, Nestle wanted to buy out the SMC stake. This proposal was rejected. Cojuangco sold almost immediately upon taking over. SMC received the equivalent of 30 years Nestle profit in one deal.

On the management side, one incident tells an interesting story. In southern China, before Cojuangco, SMC had a marketing structure for its beer distribution that involved 300 sub-distributors. Cojuangco reduced the number of sub-distributors to only 30. This is a huge disparity. Either the first scheme had 10 times as many distributors than was necessary (if so this was a huge mistake) or Cojuangco reduced it so much that there was no way that SMC could sell its beer. Of course the proof is in the fact the international operations are breakeven if not profitable, for the first time ever.

I am probably being overly cautious, but I would sell and wait for at least six months before returning to the stock if there is a change in the corporate leadership. Under new "management" I cannot see SMC doing any better than the stock market in general and perhaps could do worse.

Anastasios Maniatis was a Greek banker who committed suicide three weeks ago. He killed himself because of losses on the Greek stock market. The Athens Stock Exchange has dropped 50 percent in the last 16 months. He is now a national hero. For two years, Greece has been in frenzy, with people selling everything they have and borrowing all the money they could to invest in the market.

This type of story has repeated itself in markets all over the world including the US with the Internet stocks. We have had crazy market swings here too from the crash of 1997 to the BW debacle. And there were many investors who lost very badly during those two particular times. However, in the 12 years I have been in this market, I have never witnessed in the Philippines the kind of buying hysteria that resulted in the Greek banker killing himself. I wonder what it is that we are doing right.

*(John Mangun can be reached at Fax No. 634-2349 or e-mail at johnmangun@yahoo.com.)*

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4. Last day of submission of entries is on February 28, 2001
5. Raffle will be drawn on March 15, 2001 at 5:30 PM at Phil-Data Business Systems, Inc. Makati Office with the supervision of a DTI representative.
6. All prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. The winners will shoulder the 20% tax for prizes exceeding Php 10,000.00.
8. Winners can only win once In the event that the name is drawn more than once, the winner will automatically get the higher prize.
9. All winners will be notified via registered mail on how, when and where (nearest authorized dealer/reseller) to claim their prizes. Winners must bring valid ID and the copy of the registered mail.
10. Prizes that are not claimed within 60 days after notification shall be forfeited with prior DTI approval.
11. Employees of Phil-Data, its PR & Advertising Agency, its resellers including their relative up to second degree of affinity or consanguinity are disqualified from joining the promo.

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3rd Prize: Five (5) Winners of OKI 6W Laser Printers
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Draw Date March 15, 2001
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2982 Series of 2000

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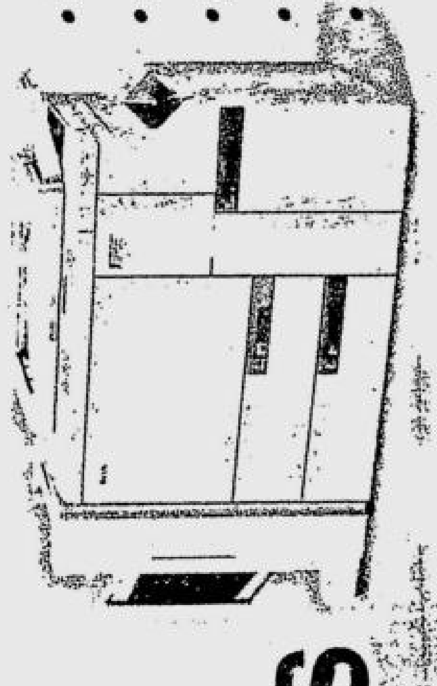

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# Rising confidence, selective buying seen lifting local stocks

By Doris C. Dumlao

MARKET PLAY

A BULLISH week is in store for local stocks as investors regain some appetite to nibble on selected issues amid an improving outlook for the economy.

Stock analysts said that among the major catalysts that brought cheers to the market was the Macapagal administration's deal with lawmakers to enact the power sector reform bill within the next two weeks.

A consensus is likewise emerging that despite some remaining uncertainties, investor confidence was rebounding as indicated by the resumption of several big merger-and-acquisition (M&A) deals involving local companies as well as the trickling in of some foreign funds.

Last week, food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. finalized a $1.2-billion deal to regain control of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. while telecom giant Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co. completed its convergence play with the acquisition of GMA-7 for P8.5 billion.

Together with the improving foreign inflow, the peso also managed to appreciate to the 48:$1 level last week after hovering between 49 and 50 against the greenback in previous weeks, thus allowing the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to again slash its key overnight rates by another 50 basis points each to bring the overnight borrowing rate down to 11 percent and the lending rate to 13.25 percent effective today.

"The market outlook remains positive given the upbeat confidence in the economy. With renewed confidence in the economy, major corporations have announced an upgrade in their capital expenditures and we may see more investment flows back into the country," BPI technical analyst Roberto Cano said.

"However, investors are still waiting for the government's comprehensive economic plan on how to bring about growth, tackle the budget deficit and encourage more investments into the country," Cano said, noting that any downward correction in the market would be an opportunity to accumulate.

As of Friday's trading, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index chalked up 26.07 points or 1.56 percent week-on-week to close at 1,695.59.

Mark Securities head of research Manny Cruz agreed that the outlook was still bullish this week. "There is stronger confidence in the economy and foreign fund managers are going back to the market, although not aggressively. They are taking position since Thursday and are buying into selective issues."

Cruz said that Meralco, a major beneficiary of Malacañang's pronouncements that it would work for the passage of the power restructuring bill, would likely continue generating investor interest this week.

AB Capital Securities analyst Tommy Villanueva said that aside from Meralco, other issues would likely benefit from the prospects that the bill would be passed within the next two months.

"We feel that Meralco "B" may yet reach its year-high of P81 by the first half of 2001. Other beneficiaries of the bill would be First Philippine Holdings (FPH) and Benpres Corp. (BPC)," Villanueva said.

"This bill is intended to lower power costs by transferring control and management of the power industry from government to the private sector. Although the government's fiscal position may be adversely affected by the passage of the bill, further delay may cause massive power outages by 2005 and block the country's access to multilateral lending agencies, which have required the release of their loans subject to reforms in the power sector," Villanueva explained.

Wise Securities research head Jose Vistan said that after People Power II, there seemed to be little impetus to rally, although there was also limited selling pressure.

# Vehicle insurer plans to raise ₱500M from IPO

VEHICLE insurer Standard Insurance Co. Inc. will file its application to conduct an initial public offering with the Philippine Stock Exchange this month amid the resurgence of investor interest following the ouster of President Estrada.

However, the insurer has decided to cut the size of its offering to P500 million from the original plan of P1 billion when it lists on the first board of the PSE.

"We're taking into account the absorptive capacity of the market. Anyway, we can always issue additional rights offering along the way," Standard Insurance president Ernesto Echauz said.

Echauz said the company, which has long prepared itself to go public in order to fund its expansion, was simply awaiting a good timing.

Four other companies have already filed an application with the PSE for public listing this year: landbanking company First Centro Inc., real estate firm Primex Corp., information technology-related SQL Wizard Inc. and telecommunications firm Radio Marine Network (Smartnet) Inc., according to PSE records.

Standard Insurance's affiliate, Centro Escolar University, is likewise preparing for an IPO this year. CEU has long been listed on the PSE but has yet to conduct an IPO. It entered the bourse in the 1980s when companies were allowed to list their shares without being required to offer any portion to the public.

Echauz, whose family owns both Standard Insurance and CEU, said the offering of Standard Insurance would definitely come first.

The company was earlier planning to raise P1 billion by offering to the public around 100 million new shares equivalent to 30 percent of total equity after the IPO. But the proposed issuance will be cut by half.

Standard Insurance, whose total resources and net worth stood at P1.55 billion and P736.8 million, respectively, has 250 million existing shares. Its paid-up capitalization of P360 million currently stands as the highest in the local non-life insurance industry.

Standard Insurance generates 60 percent of its businesses from vehicle insurance, 30 percent from fire insurance and 10 percent from marine and personal insurance.

Standard Insurance is the second most profitable non-life insurer in the country last year with a net income after tax of P102 million, although lower than the P132.13 million chalked up in 1998.

The company's net premium income last year stood at P772 million, up from P715.2 million in 1998.

The underwriters tapped by the company for the offering are PCI Capital and SB Capital.

## Stable . . .

(From page B1)

Currently, the peso is trading about P6 over the baht.

Allegations that ousted President Estrada had received more than P400 million in jueteng payoffs and P130 million in kickbacks from tobacco taxes had pulled down the peso to 51.48 to $1 on Oct. 30 and to 54.79 to $1 last Jan. 18.

"The peso is stronger now and is trading below 50. It has yet to settle at more stable levels but we will let market forces set the peso and the role of the government is to put in place fair and orderly policies," President Macapagal-Arroyo had earlier promised.

## Stocks . . .

(From page B1)

deal with lawmakers to have the power sector reform bill enacted within the next two weeks.

A consensus is likewise emerging that despite some remaining uncertainties, investor confidence is on the rebound as indicated by the resumption of several big merger-and-acquisition (M&A) deals involving local companies.

## Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, February 9, 2001)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES | | | | | |
| BANKS | | | | | |
| Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc. | 7 | 7.2 | 7 | 7.2 | 23,000 |
| Banco Filipino Sav & Mort | 121 | 121 | 120 | 120 | 900 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 71 | 71 | 70 | 70 | 26,700 |
| China Banking Corp. | 750 | 750 | 700 | 700 | 530 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 54 | 54 | 53.5 | 54 | 399,000 |
| First E-Bank Corp. | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2,000 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 234 | 234 | 232 | 233 | 69,110 |
| Philippine National Bank | 34 | 34.5 | 34 | 34.5 | 538,300 |
| FINANCIAL SERVICE | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 1.68 | 1.7 | 1.68 | 1.68 | 50,000 |
| Filipino Fund Inc. | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.39 | 100,000 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1330 | 1330 | 1295 | 1300 | 4,320 |
| Sun Life Financial Serv. | 1120 | 1150 | 1120 | 1150 | 6,840 |
| COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL | | | | | |
| COMMUNICATION | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 48 | 48.5 | 48 | 48.5 | 25,800 |
| Diversified Fin. Network | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 1,000 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.77 | 0.77 | 0.76 | 0.76 | 2,910,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 705 | 715 | 705 | 710 | 570 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.06 | 0.06 | 19,400,000 |
| Liberty Telecoms Holdings | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 70,000 |
| Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp. | 4.05 | 4.05 | 4 | 4 | 30,000 |
| Piltel | 0.87 | 0.89 | 0.87 | 0.89 | 1,040,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 910 | 910 | 900 | 900 | 139,300 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 1.04 | 1.06 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 309,000 |
| Philweb.Com Inc. | 0.0875 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.0825 | 640,000,000 |
| POWER & ENERGY | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 54 | 56.5 | 54 | 56 | 67,100 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 62.5 | 65 | 62 | 64.5 | 2,308,700 |
| Petron Corp. | 1.96 | 2.02 | 1.96 | 1.98 | 17,182,000 |
| TRANSPORTATION SERVICES | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 410,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 1.34 | 1.38 | 1.34 | 1.36 | 2,710,000 |
| Keppel Phils. Marine Inc. | 0.51 | 0.57 | 0.51 | 0.57 | 190,000 |
| William, Gothong & Aboitiz | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 | 1.98 | 140,000 |
| CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS | | | | | |
| Alsons Cement Corp. | 0.22 | 0.23 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 310,000 |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.53 | 0.54 | 1,320,000 |
| Fortune Cement Corp. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 20,000 |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 50,000 |
| Union Cement Corp. | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 1,700,000 |
| FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO | | | | | |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp. | 2.5 | 2.75 | 2.5 | 2.75 | 7,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.25 | 11.25 | 142,000 |
| La Tondena Distillersinc. | 39 | 39.5 | 38.5 | 38.5 | 514,200 |
| Pancake House, Inc. | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 2,000 |
| RFM Corp. | 1.06 | 1.1 | 1.06 | 1.08 | 2,556,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 51.5 | 51.5 | 51 | 51.5 | 227,200 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 64 | 64 | 62.5 | 63.5 | 1,051,500 |
| HOLDING FIRMS | | | | | |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg A | 0.57 | 0.58 | 0.56 | 0.56 | 70,000 |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg B | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 10,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 8.2 | 8.4 | 8.2 | 8.4 | 1,560,000 |
| Alsons Cons. Res. Inc. | 0.185 | 0.2 | 0.185 | 0.2 | 910,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 1.66 | 1.7 | 1.66 | 1.7 | 2,481,000 |
| Alliance Global Group Inc. | 12.5 | 12.5 | 12 | 12.5 | 2,200 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 520,000 |
| APC Group Inc. | 0.23 | 0.24 | 0.23 | 0.235 | 2,070,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 1,000,000 |
| Atn Holdings Inc. | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 5,000 |
| Balabac Resources & Hldgs | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 20,000 |
| Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc. | 12 | 12.25 | 12 | 12.25 | 495,500 |
| Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.22 | 0.24 | 0.22 | 0.24 | 350,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.15 | 3.2 | 2,442,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 350,000 |
| Southeast Asian Cement | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 300,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 0.58 | 0.59 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 1,440,000 |
| Ebecom Holdings Inc. | 0.195 | 0.195 | 0.19 | 0.19 | 1,200,000 |
| Ever-Gotesco Resources | 0.048 | 0.048 | 0.046 | 0.046 | 2,000,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 1.28 | 1.36 | 1.28 | 1.34 | 4,797,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 23.75 | 24.25 | 23.5 | 24 | 1,833,700 |
| Forum Pacific Inc. | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 100,000 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 0.39 | 430,000 |
| Guoco Holdings (Phils.) | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 110,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 15.25 | 15.25 | 15 | 15 | 231,000 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 530,000 |
| Macroasia Corp. | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 25,000 |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. A | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 300,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 0.95 | 1.02 | 0.95 | 0.98 | 19,400,000 |
| Magnum Holdings Inc. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 10,000 |
| Multitech Inv. Corp. | 0.36 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 50,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.68 | 0.69 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 4,120,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | 0.83 | 0.88 | 0.83 | 0.85 | 9,510,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.42 | 0.43 | 0.41 | 0.43 | 2,020,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.53 | 0.55 | 0.53 | 0.55 | 20,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.39 | 0.4 | 1,160,000 |
| MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING | | | | | |
| Active Alliance Inc. | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 10,000 |
| A Brown Company Inc. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.69 | 0.69 | 100,000 |
| Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc. | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 6,000 |
| Macondray Plastics Inc. | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 3,000 |
| Music Corp. | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 331,000 |
| Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 0.67 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 200,000 |
| Picop Resources Inc. | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.15 | 5,080,000 |
| Philtread Tire & Rubber B | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 1,000 |
| Reynolds Philippine Corp. | 0.19 | 0.19 | 0.17 | 0.17 | 70,000 |
| Central Azucar Don Pedro | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 120,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.5 | 11.75 | 357,000 |
| HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | 0.68 | 0.68 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 900,000 |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc. | 0.66 | 0.71 | 0.65 | 0.7 | 20,660,000 |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | 0.65 | 0.67 | 0.6 | 0.67 | 8,300,000 |
| Manila Jockey Club | 15.5 | 20 | 15.5 | 20 | 32,700 |
| Philippine Racing Club | 4 | 4.1 | 4 | 4 | 194,000 |
| BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) | 48 | 48.5 | 48 | 48 | 574,300 |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref | 3.55 | 3.55 | 3.55 | 3.55 | 3,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref. | 535 | 535 | 535 | 535 | 150 |
| Equitable PCI Bank-War | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 236,000 |
| Jollibee Warrants | 11 | 11 | 10.75 | 10.75 | 225,400 |
| Omico Corp. Warrant | 0.0034 | 0.0036 | 0.0034 | 0.0034 | 519,000,000 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series V | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 1,600 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series W | 10.5 | 10.75 | 10.5 | 10.75 | 1,600 |
| PLDT (10% PREF) SERIES Y | 10.75 | 10.75 | 10.75 | 10.75 | 1,200 |
| Waterfront Phils-Warrant | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 100,000 |
| PROPERTY | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 6.8 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6,659,000 |
| Araneta Properties Inc. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 40,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 0.36 | 0.38 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 7,480,000 |
| Cebu Prop. Vent. A | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 30,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 300,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.45 | 0.46 | 0.44 | 0.45 | 14,950,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 2.85 | 3 | 2.85 | 2.95 | 17,546,000 |
| Gotesco Land Inc. | 0.045 | 0.045 | 0.045 | 0.045 | 100,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land Inc. | 0.44 | 0.44 | 0.44 | 0.44 | 100,000 |
| MRC Allied Ind. Inc. | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 50,000 |
| Philippine Estates Corp. | 0.12 | 0.14 | 0.12 | 0.14 | 4,350,000 |
| Robinsons Land Corp. | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 65,000 |
| Phil Realty and Holdings | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 150,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 50,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 6.8 | 7 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 20,810,000 |
| Universal Rightfield Prop | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.125 | 0.125 | 1,200,000 |
| MINING | | | | | |
| Abra Mining & Industrial | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 45,000,000 |
| Dizon Copper Silver Mines | 3.45 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 51,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. B | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 11,000,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.005 | 0.0055 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 217,000,000 |
| Polar Mines & Dev't Corp. | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.021 | 2,500,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. A | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 420,000 |
| OIL | | | | | |
| Imperial Res. | 0.033 | 0.033 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 22,700,000 |
| Interport Res. B | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 0.0065 | 4,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 6,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 4,000,000 |
| Pacifica | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.019 | 0.019 | 45,900,000 |
| Sinophil Corp. | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 3,500,000 |
| Vulcan Ind'l | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 110,000 |

## CURRENCIES

Feb. 9, 2001

| Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Foreign currency in US$ | Foreign currency in Peso |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1.088732 | 1.000000 | 48.2840 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.009337 | 0.008576 | 0.4141 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.572999 | 1.444800 | 69.7607 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.139588 | 0.128212 | 6.1906 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.651545 | 0.598444 | 28.8953 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.721445 | 0.662647 | 31.9952 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.623022 | 0.572246 | 27.6303 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.637484 | 0.585529 | 28.2717 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 2.888036 | 2.652661 | 128.0811 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.290297 | 0.266638 | 12.8743 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.621068 | 0.570451 | 27.5437 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000113 | 0.000104 | 0.0050 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.025587 | 0.023502 | 1.1348 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.296455 | 0.272294 | 13.1474 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000861 | 0.000791 | 0.0382 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 0.918500 | 44.3489 |
| Germany | Mark | 0.511292 | 0.469622 | 22.6752 |
| France | Franc | 0.152450 | 0.140024 | 6.7609 |
| Netherlands | Guilder | 0.453780 | 0.416797 | 20.1246 |
| Austria | Schilling | 0.072673 | 0.066750 | 3.2230 |
| Belgium | Franc | 0.024789 | 0.022769 | 1.0994 |
| Italy | Lire | 0.000516 | 0.000474 | 0.0229 |
| Finland | Markka | 0.168167 | 0.154461 | 7.4580 |
| Portugal | Escudo | 0.004987 | 0.004581 | 0.2212 |
| Spain | Peseta | 0.006010 | 0.00552 | 0.2665 |
| Luxemburg | Franc | 0.024789 | 0.022769 | 1.0994 |
| Ireland | Punt | 1.269738 | 1.166254 | 56.3114 |

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| Camp John Hay | 500,000.00 | 350,000.00 | Subic Golf | 310,000.00 | - |
| Canyon Woods | 400,000.00 | - | Tagaytay Country Club | 500,000.00 | 470,000.00 |
| Celebrity Sports | 220,000.00 | 200,000.00 | Tagaytay Midlands | Please Call | 880,000.00 |
| Fontana C | 160,000.00 | - | Tagaytay Highlands | - | 1,100,000.00 |
| Fontana D | 90,000.00 | - | Tivoli Royale | 230,000.00 | - |
| Forest Hills A | 290,000.00 | PleaseCall | Wack-Wack | Please Call | 7,500,000.00 |
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|---|---|
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| Tagaytay Midlands | 910,000 |
| Manila Golf Ind. | 15M |
| Corp | 17.5M |
| Southwood B | 950,000 |

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| Eagleridge "A" | 350,000 | - |
| Eagleridge "B" | 495,000 | - |
| Forest Hills | 250,000 | 300,000 |
| Manila Golf (indv.) | 13,000,000 | 16,000,000 |
| Manila Southwoods "A" | 800,000 | 900,000 |
| Manila Southwoods "B" | Please Call | - |
| Orchard Golf "A" | 280,000 | - |
| Q.C. Sports | 220,000 | - |
| Riviera | 250,000 | - |
| Royale Tagaytay | Please Call | Please Call |
| Sta. Elena | 1,700,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC | 1,150,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Midlands | - | 950,000 |
| Valle Verde (Indv.) | 150,000 | - |
| Valley Golf | 330,000 | - |
| Wack-Wack | 7,100,000 | 8,000,000 |

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| 3. | BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB | 750,000 | 700,000 |
| 4. | CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" | 150,000 | 100,000 |
| 5. | CAMP JOHN HAY | 400,000 | 320,000 |
| 6. | CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB | 850,000 | |
| 7. | CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB | 120,000 | |
| 8. | CELEBRITY CLUB | 220,000 | 200,000 |
| 9. | COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS | 490,000 | 450,000 |
| 10. | CLUB FILIPINO | 340,000 | 320,000 |
| 11. | EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A" | 250,000 | 220,000 |
| 12. | EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A" | 400,000 | 350,000 |
| 13. | EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A" | 130,000 | |
| 14. | FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER | Pls. Call | Pls. Call |
| 15. | FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" | 300,000 | 260,000 |
| 16. | FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B" | 550,000 | |
| 17. | FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C" | 600,000 | |
| 18. | MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A" | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| 19. | MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B" | 550,000 | |
| 20. | MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.) | 15,500,000 | |
| 21. | MANILA POLO CLUB | | 2,600,000 |
| 22. | MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B" | 1,000,000 | 900,000 |
| 23. | MANILA YACHT CLUB | 650,000 | |
| 24. | METROPOLITAN CLUB "A" | 170,000 | |
| 25. | METROPOLITAN CLUB "B" | 200,000 | 100,000 |
| 26. | MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.) | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| 27. | MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (CORP.) | 900,000 | |
| 28. | ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" | Pls. Call | 280,000 |
| 29. | ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B" | Pls. Call | Pls. Call |
| 30. | ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C" | Pls. Call | Pls. Call |
| 31. | QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB | 250,000 | |
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| Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner) | 1,800,000 | - |
| Baguio Country Club | 800,000 | 850,000 |
| Calatagan Golf Club "A" | 80,000 | 100,000 |
| Calatagan Golf Club "B" | - | 130,000 |
| Camp John Hay | 350,000 | 375,000 |
| Canlubang | 800,000 | 850,000 |
| Canyonwoods | - | 400,000 |
| Capitol Hills | 100,000 | 115,000 |
| Cebu Country Club | 2,000,000 | 2,200,000 |
| Celebrity Sports Club | 200,000 | 220,000 |
| City Sports Club Cebu "A" | - | 709,500 |
| City Sports Club Cebu "B" | - | 764,500 |
| City Sports Club Cebu "C" | - | 1,226,500 |
| Club Filipino | 300,000 | 330,000 |
| Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C" | Please Call | Please Call |
| Eastridge "A" | - | 260,000 |
| Evercrest "A" | - | 110,000 |
| Forest Hills "A" | 250,000 | 275,000 |
| Forest Hills "B" | - | 290,000 |
| Forest Hills "C" | - | 450,000 |
| Makati Sports Club "A" | 400,000 | 450,000 |
| Makati Sports Club "B" | - | 500,000 |
| Manila Golf (Corporate) | - | 18,000,000 |
| Manila Golf (Individual) | 15,000,000 | 18,000,000 |
| Manila Polo | 2,700,000 | - |
| Manila Southwoods "A" | 820,000 | 850,000 |
| Manila Southwoods "B" | 850,000 | 920,000 |
| Metropolitan Club "B" | - | 200,000 |
| Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.) | Please Call | Please Call |
| Montemar (Corp.) | - | 55,000 |
| Montemar (Ind.) | - | 30,000 |
| Orchard Golf Club "A" | Please Call | Please Call |
| Orchard Golf Club "B" | Please Call | Please Call |
| Orchard Golf Club "C" | - | Please Call |
| Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C" | - | Please Call |
| Puerto Azul | 110,000 | 150,000 |
| Quezon City Sports Club | 230,000 | 250,000 |
| Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C" | Please Call | Please Call |
| Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C" | Please Call | Please Call |
| Sta. Elena "A" | 1,900,000 | 2,100,000 |
| Sta. Elena "B" | 2,100,000 | 2,400,000 |
| Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.) | - | Please Call |
| Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.) | - | Please Call |
| Tagaytay Country Club | 490,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Highlands | 1,100,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Midlands | 880,000 | 910,000 |
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|---|---|---|---|
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| Canlubang | 70,000 | Riviera "A" | 15,000 |
| Eagleridge | 30,000 | Sta. Elena | 70,000 |
| Eastridge "A" | 20,000 | Tagaytay CC | 30,000 |
| Forest Hills | 30,000 | Tagaytay Golf | 65,000 |
| Manila Southwoods | 50,000 | Tivoli Royale | 20,000 |
| Makati Sports "A" | 36,000 | Valley Golf | 20,000 |
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# Oil firms feel price crunch as gov't restores crude tariff

**By Christine A. Gaylican**

LOCAL refiners said the 3-percent tariff on imported crude and refined petroleum that the Macapagal administration restored last week was creating an upward pressure on local fuel prices.

Former President Joseph Estrada lifted the 3-percent tariff on imported crude and refined petroleum for three months to prevent the country's oil firms from significantly raising their prices.

Estrada was forced to suspend the tariff to ease political pressure stemming from the public's outrage over charges that he received millions in illegal gambling payoffs.

Last week, President Macapagal-Arroyo has restored the 3-percent tariff on imported crude and refined petroleum to shore up the government's revenues and plug a deficit that her economic managers said could exceed P200 billion this year.

The tariff, however, is forcing oil firms that rely heavily on imports to jack up their prices to recover costs.

Local oil firms are set to raise their prices this month to cover for rising world crude prices.

Officials of the country's "Big Three" oil refiners—Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc.—said the peso's recent gains against the dollar would not offset higher petroleum prices abroad.

They said world crude prices had been rising since oil-producing countries decided to cut production effective Feb. 1.

Opec ministers agreed to reduce output by 1.5 million barrels per day, just over 5 percent, to underpin crude prices at $25 per barrel.

Officials of Petron, Shell and Caltex said they expected Opec's production cut to jack up the price of Dubai crude, which had moved up to $22.07 per barrel as of Jan. 16 from $21.65 per barrel in December.

Philippine Institute of Petroleum Inc. executive director Reynaldo Marquez said Opec's target to maintain prices at $25 to $26 per barrel would definitely raise local pump prices.

"The recent decline of international crude prices to a low of $19 per barrel had forced Opec to mull a cutback of some 1.5 million to two million barrels from its daily production. If this happens, the second phase of the rollback may not be possible. We should also monitor the peso deterioration," Marquez said.

Petron, Shell and Caltex cut gasoline prices last month by 60 centavos per liter and diesel and kerosene prices by 50 centavos per liter. New oil players Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. and Total Petroleum Philippines Inc. also reduced their prices, with Unioil slashing gasoline prices by 52 centavos and diesel prices by 42 centavos and Total cutting gasoline prices by 60 centavos and diesel prices by 50 centavos.

# SEC to allow mutual funds to invest abroad

**By Elena R. Torrijos**

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission said it would allow Philippine-registered mutual funds to invest 20 percent of their portfolios in foreign funds or securities.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said officials of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, in a meeting on Friday, had no objection to allowing the country's mutual funds to invest in equities abroad.

Bautista told reporters the central bank merely wanted these mutual funds to secure prior approval from regulators should their investments abroad amount to more than $6 million.

She said the SEC might still lay out other conditions, although the commission had already decided to let mutual funds invest 20 percent of their portfolios abroad.

The SEC said earlier it was favorably considering the request of international insurance groups to allow Philippine-registered mutual funds to invest in foreign securities.

The statement was in reaction to a request from Sun Life Insurance Co. and Philippine-American Life and General Assurance Co. that they be allowed to introduce Philippine-registered mutual funds that would invest in the US equities market.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Sun Life Asset Management Co. Inc. last month asked the SEC to approve its plan to create a mutual fund that would invest in equities in the United States and other international markets.

# The Foundation of Process Manufacturing Solutions in the New Economy

***Who are the process manufacturers? These are companies that produce paints, inks, chemicals, plastics, coatings, adhesives, soaps, cosmetics, lubricants, medicines, food, beverages flavorings, sauces, dressings, marinades, condiments, seasonings or specialty food items.***

### *At the Core*

Process manufacturers face the challenge of handling the unique processing and monitoring of materials, containers, formulas, intermediates, lot expiration dates, liquid and dry unit of measure conversions.

Formulas are at the heart of process manufacturing. In most cases, it is the most valuable asset. Thus, providing a safe repository of master formulas and streamlining formula management is fundamental.

### *Keeping the Ingredients in line*

Each material within a formula has its own unique unit of measure for maximum flexibility. Loss factors may be assigned to the formula as a whole, and/or to individual materials to account for various losses during manufacturing. Should the formula react in processing, there must be a way to track an output formula to control final formula composition.

### *Lot Traceability*

A complete lot traceability empowers process manufacturers with precision and accuracy.

When ingredients, materials or containers are received, lot numbers, lot expiration dates, quarantine dates, lot strength must be simultaneously recorded in a system. Gary Hess of American Licorice opined that the implementation of this procedure gives an organization the visibility it needs to avoid expensive production problems.

The numbers are automatically tracked when material is pulled from inventory for use in production through processing, packaging and warehousing. If there was ever the need, the origin of a spice in a bottle of salad dressing would be traced.

### *Precision in Inventory Management*

The MRP module will accelerate overall material control and management by automatically calculating net material requirements and aligning purchases and production orders for timely receipts. Having a precise inventory management system results in significant cost savings because overstocking and production delays caused by insufficient raw materials are avoided.

With seamless integration between formula and inventory, running totals on costs, weight, volume, and density can be viewed while entering or revising formula ingredients during production. Furthermore, process manufacturers get real time tracking of raw material costs as new formulas are developed. The effect that re-sizing will have on the per-unit cost can therefore be determined.

### *Scheduler*

A static scheduling decision support tool will not thrive in an environment where scheduling issues frequently occur.

One issue is Production's ability to cope with sudden changes such as rush orders, operators reporting sick or machine breakdown. Another is the accuracy of forecasts. There are times when, as a result of poor judgment, materials are ordered too early or resources are overloaded.

Whether the problem is that of unforeseen changes or misjudgment, in the eyes of the customer, the process manufacturer's reliability is compromised when deliveries are not met.

Scheduling is of paramount importance in the quest for customer delight. To schedule successfully, the balance between demand and a varying but finite supply must be maintained.

A planner's tool must provide the visibility required to change priority for urgent jobs, lock critical jobs into position, alter shift patterns, allocate overtime. This tool must compare many schedules before making decisions and quickly assess the effect of break downs to bring up reliable and real time response to customer queries.

### *Anecdotes of Mismatched Application*

Every thing has a purpose for its being. Birds fly just as man is meant to work. Similarly, applications have to suit the specific needs of clients so that they will reap the rewards of the solution. Mismatch in application leads to disastrous results.

Bill Baker, Vice President of Flavor Systems International, Inc. recounted: "We purchased a generic system that addressed the needs of a typical discrete manufacturer, but being in processing we were continually modifying the system. Even then it would still not address many of our key issues such as yield and loss factors."

Stephen Yucho, Controller of United Paints, narrated: "our yields would be plus or minus a few gallons, which resulted in partially full containers that would need to be tracked and blended. We would end up invoicing without a true picture of our costs and that caused a lot of misinformation as well as duplication of work by making adjustments to the general ledger."

### *Moving Forward*

As E-Business facilitates the digital integration of suppliers, consumers and employees, process manufacturers have to strategize E-commerce solutions especially in the spectrum of procurement, online marketplace portal and storefront.

Process manufacturers must employ a multidimensional database that can accommodate *on-line analytical processing (OLAP). On line analytical processing is the ability to organize data hierarchically in multiple dimensions for end-users to quickly create, calculate, and analyze complex data relationships.*

Think of the value of being able to view all current, critical operational, production and in a single spreadsheet, or via the web, whenever and wherever.

We have heard the adage, "Knowledge is Power." Thomas Stewart, author of Intellectual Capital observed that *"A company that is not managing knowledge is not paying attention to business"*.

Capture how you do business by documenting and collecting policies, templates and best practices into process frameworks and then publish them in the website allowing users to quickly locate information needed.

With business conditions changing every second, process manufacturers must find cost effective solutions to build the foundation required to boost bottom line in the new economy.

*(The author is Dada del Carmen, Knowledge Management Director of IM2 Corporation. For more inquiries, you may reach her at fax no. 726-2203 or e-mail address ddc@im2.com.ph)*

# SIA OFFERS TREAT FOR TWO TO SINGAPORE

Singapore Airlines gives you the chance to surprise your loved ones with an early summer holiday treat this January to March with two exciting tour offerings in and around New Asia.

Avail of an exotic three-day/two-night Cruise Package from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur and the popular coastal town of Port Dickson in Malaysia on-board the SuperStar Virgo, a premiere luxury floating resort. Priced at only $999 for two persons, the package includes roundtrip Manila-Singapore economy airfare on Singapore Airlines, cabin accommodation and full-board meals. Cruise departs every Wednesday. As a Valentine treat, passengers who are sailing on February 7, 14 and 21 have the option of leaving Manila a day earlier and enjoy a free one-night stay in Singapore, together with hotel accommodation and airport/hotel transfer.

SuperStar Virgo is the newest and largest mega-ship in the Asia-Pacific region. The pride and joy of Star Cruises, it can accommodate up to 2,000 passengers, and has a variety of facilities for non-stop entertainment, dining, sports and business activities. The luxury liner features 16 restaurants and food outlets, gym and spa, swimming pools, fun and game arcades, discos, state-of-the art cinema, auditorium, library and a modern business center.

On the other hand, those who want to simply enjoy the Lion City can take advantage of the four-day/three-night Singapore Package at $799 for two. The package includes roundtrip Manila-Singapore economy airfare on Singapore Airlines, hotel accommodation, daily breakfasts, roundtrip airport/hotel transfers, and a choice of three of the following: the City Experience Tour, Singapore River Boat Tour, and admissions to the Singapore Zoological Gardens, Night Safari, Jurong Bird Park, Underwater World (Sentosa) and Images of Singapore (also in Sentosa). The first 300 passengers of this package can claim a free limited edition Swatch watch.

Singapore Airlines is a consistent recipient of many industry and travel awards, including Conde Nast Traveler's Best International Airline award in 11 out of the last 12 years. SIA's economy class also offers passengers first-class perks such as free-flowing champagne, a wide selection of gourmet meals, and a state-of-the-art inflight entertainment and communication system.

The above packages are valid from January 16 to March 21, 2001. Book early for your choice of departure dates. For more details or to make your bookings on the Cruise Package, please contact your travel agent. For the Singapore Package, you may call your travel agent or the SIA Tours Desk at 751-5151/52 or 810-4960 extension 4005/4006.

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# The house the copier built is constantly changing

BY ARIES BELZA ESPINOSA

> Today, from simply distributing and servicing Konica copiers, U-Bix is responsible for the corporate existence of 8 other businesses in the Philippines

THE first U-Bix offices were set up at 1331 Angono Street, just across the Makati City Hall, on February 11, 1974. The nature of the business was simple enough to summarize into one word: copiers. U-Bix, founded by Edilberto B. Bravo and Enrique M. Belo, began as the exclusive distributor of Konica copiers in the Philippines.

VIDA TY

U-Bix could have just contentedly leaned back and sat on its comfortable position in the photocopying industry, but it didn't. In 1976, U-Bix assembled copiers. In 1989, it introduced EPSON printers in the market, and consequently also began assembling EPSON CKD printers in 1993. In the same year, U-Bix ventured into the exclusive distributorship of Okamura office systems furniture. In 1994, U-Bix went into assembly and manufacturing as it entered into a licensing agreement with US-based SuperiorChair. In 1995, U-Bix, through subsidiary Facilities Managers, Inc.. signed an exclusive franchise agreement with ServiceMaster for the Philippines. The latest business venture for U-Bix has been made as recently as 1999, when it signed a deal with Fujitsu airconditioners to distribute and service its products throughout the country.

Today, from simply distributing and servicing Konica copiers, U-Bix is responsible for the corporate existence of eight other businesses in the Philippines. You would think U-Bix has unnecessarily complicated its corporate life. Ask Edilberto Bravo, however, and you will be convinced that U-Bix isn't complicated, it has just "grown."

"Every company should grow, and the growth should be something that is related to what you do," he says. Bravo maintains that U-Bix is still simple. In fact, he stresses, only three words are needed to describe U-Bix today: integrated office systems.

The entire history, thus far, for U-Bix has been following closely the changing landscape of office spaces and its fixtures. "We have expanded in the sense that from office equipment, we have gone into office furniture, and then into office services such as cleaning, and then to domestic services. New business starts from where we last left off," Bravo explains.

Executive Vice President Vida Ty adds, ``In U-Bix you learn new things everyday, no matter how long you've been here." Ty is a pioneer of U-Bix.

The house that U-Bix built, therefore, is constantly being changed by its people and by its customers. "You need change," Bravo quips. ``It ensures that our minds are always fresh and sharp, and that means we can anticipate and address the coming needs of modern offices."

Some things in U-Bix have remained constant, however. One permanent character in U-Bix history has been Konica. It was the vehicle that launched U-Bix, and it has remained one of U-Bix's top draws. Konica had catapulted U-Bix to the number one position in the photocopier industry in 1979. Today, Konica's top-of-the-line digital copiers promise to ensure U-Bix's top position in the digital photocopying industry.

"The digital world has spawned electronic communication that, instead of diminishing need for copying, has instead added to the increase of copy volumes. We have packed into our digital copiers, application programs that give users the total control in the copying process—what is needed, where it is needed, when it is needed and how it is needed," Bravo had said in his message to guests of the launching of Konica's latest digital copiers last Oct. 11 and 12, 2000. This, in essence, is what modern offices needed in the context of copy-on-demand, Bravo stressed. *(See story on latest Konica copiers)*

Is the cast now complete for U-Bix? "Business will never be complete. The cast of characters will never be complete," Bravo responds. "Once you say it is, then you are ready to end it."

``U-Bix has just started the new century," Bravo smiles.

THE 40-year friendship between Edilberto Bravo and Enrique M. Belo (seated) has produced one of the most dynamic and enduring companies in the country. Today that partnership continues. As Bravo helms U-Bix and its varied businesses, Belo remains as Board Chairman.

# Bringing digital solutions to every office requirement

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

THANKS to advances in digital technology, organizations are shifting the way they manage their document flow. The digital age has spawned a new generation of office equipment that is revolutionizing work places. These machines can be networked so that they are able to "talk" to one another. It brought numerous conveniences considered unlikely some years back.

What we are witnessing is a transition from analog to digital technology, accompanied by a merging of functions (machines now can perform multiple tasks). With the growth of networked office environments, internet and intranet communications, yesterday's document production standard is moving toward distributed printing and printing on demand, and away from the inefficient use of traditional photocopiers for document reproduction.

The development of digital processing methods is the key factor that makes this possible. Leading the transition to the digital office is Konica, a veteran digital company that is leading the effort in implementing digital technology into lower-volume products.

## Interconnectivity

Here in the Philippines, UBIX-Konica is pacesetting the industry in providing digital solutions for document creation, production, and distribution. Just recently, UBIX-Konica launched a new line of digital copiers—K-7075, K-7150, K-7020, K7030 and K7728 with each model catering to a distinct market.

"For convenience we have made the last two digits of Konica model numbers to indicate the copies it can print per minute. All four models can be networked to your office system since they are compatible with most operating systems. On the other hand, the K-7075 and K-7150 can work in tandem, meaning, you can network as many of these machines to come out with more number of copies at lesser time frame," explains Edgardo Manilao Sr., AVP-technical services at U-BIX Corp.

Photos by MIKE ALQUINIO
MANILAO

## Twin-Beam Laser Writing System

Most copiers use an analog or "light lens" process in which light is reflected off an original placed on the platen glass and put it on the drum surface, once for every copy it makes. That means the original is scanned by the copier through the document feeding system 50 times to copy 50 sets of documents! Not so with UBIX-Konica digital copiers: while reflected light from the original is still used, the reflected image is converted to digital signals just once and stored in the copier's memory.

The signal is, in turn, directed onto the light-sensitive drum surface via Konica's high-speed Twin-Beam Laser Writing System which produces a single twin beam capable of scribing twice the speed of conventional single beam units. The system prints unlimited multiple sets of complete documents from memory, so that every copy is an exact replica of the original. Much more, there is reduced production time and minimized wear on important parts.

K-7075

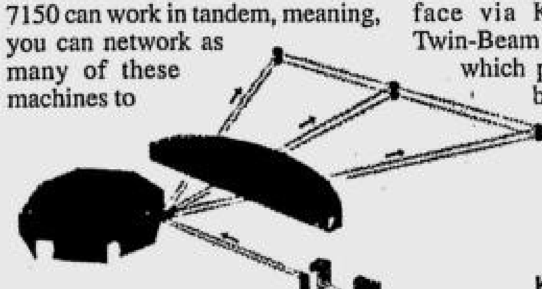
## Power of printing press in one compact machine

Not every digital copier can go the long haul. The Konica 7075 Enterprise Document System is intended for markets producing documents in high volume. Designed to produce 500,000 pages per month at 75 cpm, this model is what manufacturers call print on demand—for printing shops who require high-speed printing like what the off-set machines are doing for them. At the output end, the optional booklet marker allows for on-line saddle stitching, post-engine sheet insertion, and offset collating of up to 3000 sheets.

"But off-set machines require a minimum number of, say books, that must be printed in order to be economical. With a K-7075 you can have the same output but you have control on how many copies you'd like to print without going off the budget," explains Malinao.

The 7075 utilizes a patented Stackless Duplex system that makes two-sided prints without stacking paper inside the paper path. This system increases productivity, improves reliability, and enables users to make duplex sets from an unlimited number of electronic-based originals. Also built with tandem capabilities, just a touch of a button and two 7075s can deliver double punch—150 pages per minute and 1,000,000 impressions per month, as either a copier or a printer.

"Any UBIX-Konica digital copier you choose is a sound investment. Your decision will boil down to copy volume, number of users and frequency of printing or copying needs. Because the production process has now become scan-distribute-print, rather than scan-print-distribute, our copiers can be centrally located without diminishing service to individual users. When it comes to operating one, the user-friendly menu screen explains it all and you can also operate it at the convenience of your workstation," add Malinao.


**KONICA's** high-speed Twin-Beam Laser Writing System produces a single twin beam capable of scribing twice the speed of conventional single beam units to produce unlimited multiple sets of complete documents from memory.

# *Adding quality to the service; giving dignity to the providers*

WE SEE them in the office everyday. We depend on them whenever "dirty" jobs need to be done. They do what they have to do quietly, discreetly. More often than not, we don't give our building maintenance and janitorial people a second thought.

Now, however, the men and women behind this industry called support services are getting the attention they deserve.

The story actually began on October 22, 1996, when US-based ServiceMaster started offering its support services to companies in the Philippines. With U-Bix as the exclusive partner in the country and Facilities Managers Inc. as the Master Franchisee, ServiceMaster initially offered janitorial, grounds keeping and general cleaning services to companies who did not have the resources to maintain their own maintenance staff.

DOPLAYNA

In no time, however, ServiceMaster also started offering skills-related services such as plant operations and maintenance, and technical support on certain equipment as well. ServiceMaster was becoming known as an outsourcing company who employed people not just with menial skills. Clients noticed that the ServiceMaster men and women were qualified enough to have leadership skills and provide general maintenance services on complicated office equipment.

What was the reason for the "evolution" of ServiceMaster's business?

## 'Trained' service providers

The answer lay in the company's people themselves. Unlike most outsourcing firms, ServiceMaster believed that its staff was built for more than just doing the dishes. It saw the potential of its recruits, and set about developing these yet unseen skills to uplift the economic and social standing of its individuals.

"ServiceMaster is probably one of the few companies whose main philosophy is the development of the individual," Col. Demosthenes "Ding" C. Doplayna, assistant general manager of FMI, attests. "In the past the cleaning profession was treated in low regard. What ServiceMaster did was to lift the profession to the same level of other more traditionally respected professions," he explains.

ServiceMaster has formulated its own curriculum, equipment and supplies, training videos, and reference materials in the development of its people's skills. These training modules are now applied in all ServiceMaster partners in 32 countries.

Here in the Philippines, the people of ServiceMaster are aided not only by the innovative training methods of the company, they are also guided by the Facilities Management Academy (FMA), a TESDA-accredited training institution/partner of ServiceMaster. U-Bix provided the first FMA training center in its Sucat, Muntinlupa City compound, as training officially started in July 2000.

The FMA training features two courses that adapt to the development of the individual. The first is a basic course in building cleaning services and maintenance. This involves a month-long training period, including an 80-hour on-the-job training. The second is an advanced course in leadership skills development in building cleaning services and maintenance. This involves a month-long training on leadership, with advanced technical skills in cleaning services and maintenance, quality assurance and process controls. The advanced course is given every three months. Graduates of the FMA are then employed by ServiceMaster and deployed to their accounts.

"The beauty of this training system," Doplayna observes, "is that those who train in the FMA are eligible for employment overseas in any of the other ServiceMaster offices in other countries. There is a continuing need for workers trained in the ServiceMaster technique."

Today, ServiceMaster/FMI handles nearly 50 major corporate clients employing either its ServiceMaster management services or its ServiceMaster cleaning service. "Management service is by contract basis, while ServiceMaster cleaning involves either a one-time cleaning of office equipment and premises or a yearly renewable contract," Doplayna explains.

The list is growing. Doplayna says that outsourcing human resources is a growing global trend as companies continue to streamline their workforce. "Outsourcing is a relatively modern concept. Companies don't need to hire permanent staff for work that is temporary in nature, or for work that is not directly related to their main business. Thus, especially in cleaning and maintenance services, that's where we come in."

"Most companies prefer ServiceMaster because our service is nearly all-encompassing. Our clients need only one company to go to."

ServiceMaster is indeed thorough in its service quality. Doplayna stresses that ServiceMaster/FMI even sources its cleaning chemicals and equipment from the home base in the United States. "That way, we are confident about their effectiveness and environmental safety."

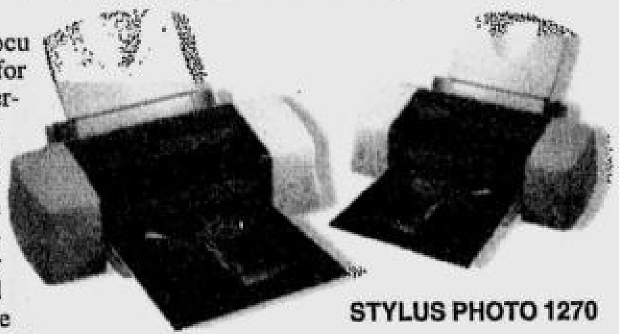
## Domestic helpers as happy helpers

This year, FMI will be applying its expertise at another oft-neglected sector of the service industry: the domestic helpers. FMI will start its training program to produce more efficient and skillful domestic helpers imbued with the proper values. "ServiceMaster will teach the science and art of maintaining homes, hotels and other facilities where taking care of individual needs is a requirement."

The name of this trained group? MerryMaids, no less. And the name of this training course? The Home Experts Course.

Doplayna concludes, "This level of quality, innovation, and social responsibility can only come from America's largest outsourcing services company." Fortune Magazine has ranked ServiceMaster as America's most admired company in the outsourcing services category for two years in a row—1998 and 1999. *(Aries Belza Espinosa)*

# Creating vivid images that last a lifetime



STYLUS PHOTO 1270

THE usefulness of producing documents or works in color whether for personal or office use cannot be overstated. Color gives added impact and serves as an effective communication tool for the user. To effectively address a diverse market, Epson came out with a wide assortment of printers. Four printers comprise the Epson Stylus Photo Inkjet Printer series: Photo Stylus 1270, 870, 750 and 720). There are five printers in the more commonly used Epson Stylus Color Inkjet Printer series: Color 3000, 1160, 880, 680 and 580. In the Desktop Laser Printer series, Epson delivers the EPL-N4000+, 5800, 5700L, N2010, N2050 and the Acculaser.

Stylus Photo 1270, Epson's high-end printer, enables graphics artists to produce breathtaking image quality up to size 11 inches x 17 inches at a speed that exceeds those of the lower models by 50 percent. Epson's PerfectPicture Imaging System incorporates 6-color printing at 1440 dots per inch resolution. The super precise Epson Micro Piezo technology and Ultra Micro Dot printing results in almost dotless printing, smoother gradations, fine grain and enhanced detail. Epson's Variable Sized Droplet Technology uses larger dot sizes in areas of solid color and smaller sizes in areas of gradation and blending. This technology allows high resolution printouts at high speed.

SANCHEZ

"What's more," adds Vincent Sanchez, General Sales Manager of CompuFax Corp., "the newly developed Intellidge Ink cartridge ensures accurate ink level display via Status Monitor 3 displayed automatically when printing."

The four Stylus Photo 1270, 870, 750 and 720 also employs a reformulated Quick Dry ink that when matched with the new resin-coated Epson Premium Glossy Photo Paper, deliver prints that retains color vividness to up to 10 years!

### High performance inkjet printers

For large-format printing, Epson's Stylus Color 3000 can print up to full A2 size paper while the Color 1160 can accommodate up to A3+ size. The Stylus Color 3000's stunning 1140 x 720 dpi photo-quality color output will definitely add life to any CAD printouts, documents, posters, banners and even continuous paper printouts.

For today's demanding business environment, the Epson Stylus Color 1160 and 860 inkjet printers deliver fast, super-sharp text, beautiful graphics and smooth operation. Both models are compatible with Macintosh, Microsoft Windows 3.1/95/98 and Windows NT 4.0 platforms.

**Being the first to introduce Epson products in the country, CompuFax Corp. remains to be its largest distributor in the country. A wholly owned subsidiary of U-BIX Corp, the company's main products line-up includes Epson printers, scanners, LCD multimedia projectors and digital cameras**

CompuFax General Sales Manager also reveals that apart from color inkjet printers, another product line where Epson enjoys a huge market share is in the dot matrix printer market. "They say dot matrix technology is outmoded but it's the contrary," says Sanchez. "The fact is, there is a growing popularity both here and abroad on dot matrix printers. It has applications data processing, accounting, banking, shipping, invoice, salary slip and documentation that is why Epson came out with a variety of models to address a particular market."

Completing its imaging solutions are Epson's digital cameras. PhotoPC 650 is perfect for a beginner. Simply point, shoot and print instantly on any Epson Stylus printer. The PhotoPC 800, with its 3.3 mega-pixel output makes it possible for the user to shoot and print up to A3 size and still maintain sharpness and brilliance. It has creative controls similar to SLR camera. The 5 mega-pixel 3000Z has zoom functions and movie and audio capture capabilities as well. *(CEBuban)*

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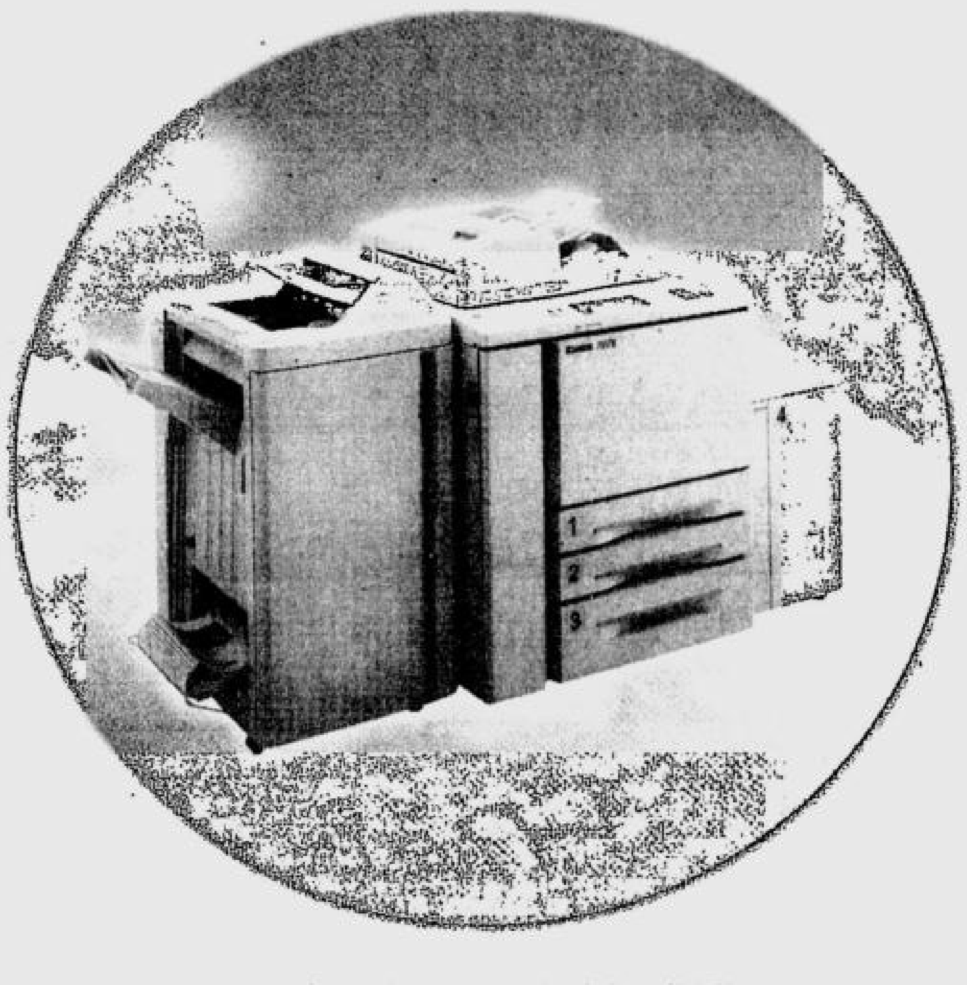

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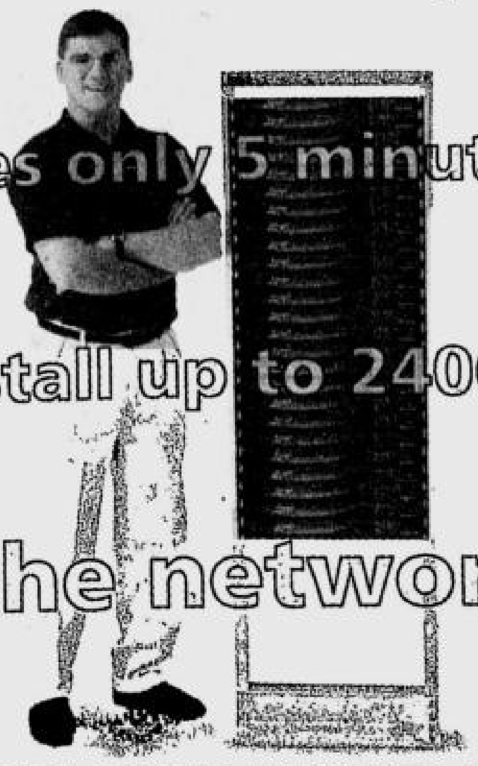

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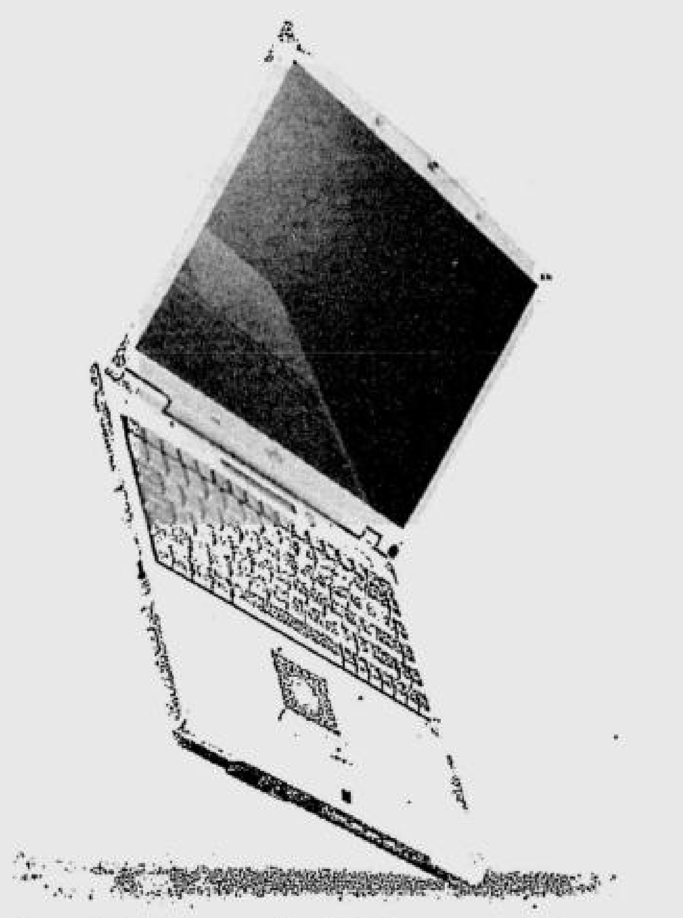

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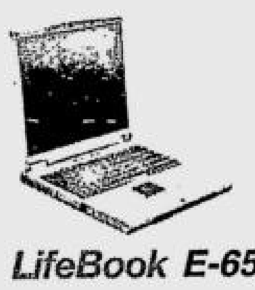

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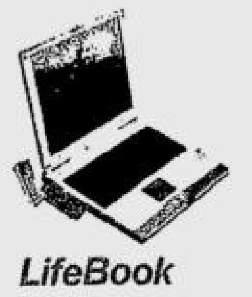

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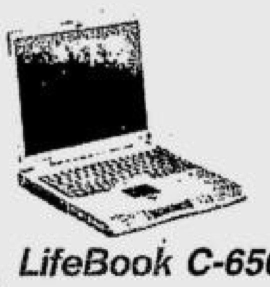

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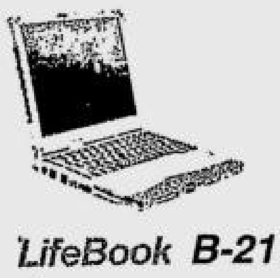

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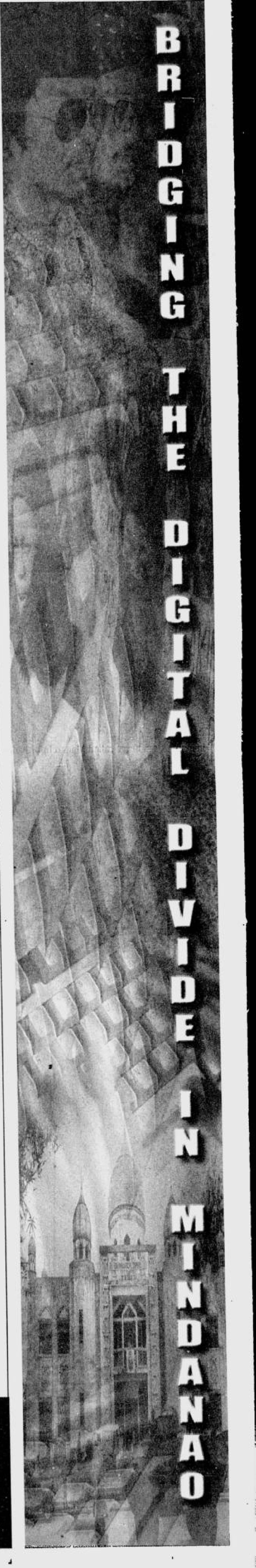

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN MINDANAO

# INFOTECH

LEO MAGNO, Editor

## Wiring Mindanao

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

DAVAO CITY—The worsening disparity between the information-rich and information-poor may not be evident in the bustling city of Metro Manila where most of the country's economic activities are taking place. However, the digital divide is evident in Mindanao where the current teledensity rate (also known as the rate indicating people's access to a telephone) as of February 2001 is only 4.60 percent or roughly 5 telephones per 100 individuals. Add to this the fact that Internet access penetration is less than one percent of this region's population of 17.7 million.

ICT (information and communications technology) professionals led by the Mindanao Business Council (MBC) and in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), signed at least eight resolutions last week in hopes that the new administration under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would deliver on her promises for ICT development not only in Metro Manila but also in the countryside. Moreover, Macapagal has appointed a "son of Mindanao"—in the person of Teofisto Guingona—as her Vice President.

One resolution suggests the creation of a clear policy ensuring affordable access to information technology and the establishment of an ICT infrastructure in the area. Local ICT players in Davao City are banking on Internet service provider Mosaic Communications Inc.'s rollout of broadband services this year.

There are currently 43 Internet service providers operating in Mindanao, most of which are clustered in Region X and Region XI, according to a February 2001 report by the National Computer Center (NCC) Mindanao Directorate. The NCC conducted the study from December 2000 to January 2001.

The report indicates that Internet access or even access to basic telephone services remains pathetic. The Internet, the report added, is often available in key cities, provinces and municipalities.

"Major ISPs have not yet seen the business sense to invest in the countryside," the NCC report reads.

Meanwhile, the National Telecommunications Commission reported that out of 17,793,215 people living in Mindanao, total subscribers numbered 240,795, for an overall teledensity rate of 1.35 percent (the nationwide teledensity rate is 3.87 percent). These data were gathered till Dec. 31, 1999.

The problem of interconnection between local exchange carriers is also evident in Mindanao.

### Task force

A Mindanao Information Technology and E-Commerce Task Force was created through a resolution signed during the first ICT Congress in Mindanao last week.

Chairpersons of the Mindanao Economic Development Council, MBC, Mindanao DOST, representatives from the regional Information Technology and E-Commerce Council, representatives from each six regions in Mindanao, and six representatives from the private sector will represent the task force.

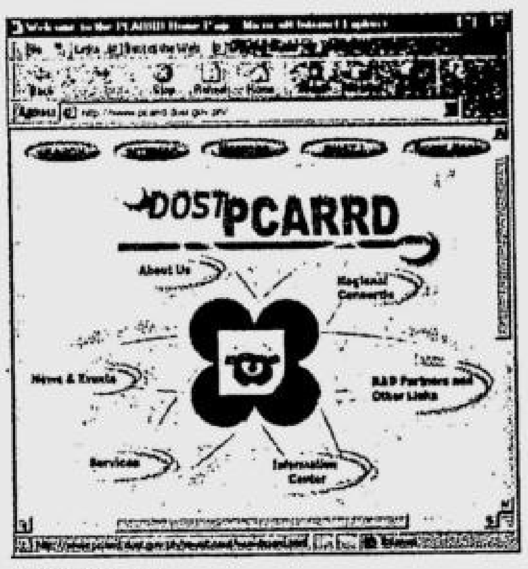
The task force's job is to chart the roadmap of Mindanao for the 21st century.

In an interview, Science Undersecretary Leopoldo Lazatin suggested that Mindanao should focus on creating a "transactional por-

WIRING/ p.B13

## After mango, banana info network being developed

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva



DOST website

DAVAO CITY—The success of the government-run Web-based portal for the Philippine mango fruit industry called Mango Information Network (MIN) has encouraged supporters of the project to create another portal for the local banana industry.

The Department of Science and Technology's (DOST) Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) created MIN back in April 1997. MIN can be accessed via the Web at http://www.pcarrd.dost.gov.ph.

Receiving a P4.1-million grant from the United Nations Development Fund, the PCARRD set up the first of a kind Web-based information system that serves the needs of the stakeholders in the local, and lately, Asian mango industry. It has also significantly helped boost the country's global competitiveness in the mango industry, according to the PCARRD.

Among the services offered by MIN include mango market information such as domestic and international market indicators and statistics on the mango industry. The website also offers a pest clinic information service which allow mango farmers to consult mango insects, pests and disease experts.

It also has a directory, a virtual bazaar and a search facility that allows anyone to find resources through MIN's online databases and links to other websites.

MIN set up four satellite nodes in Zambales, Palawan, Iloilo and Davao, which acted as access points of information for mango growers and farmers. All these nodes are currently connected to the PCARRD in Los Baños, Laguna.

With the first phase of the project ending last year, MIN subsequently allied with the Department of Agriculture-National Agricultural and Fishery Council (DA-NAFC).

The PCARRD indicated that the agriculture agency decided to extend financial assistance to the MIN project for the second phase of the project from 2001 to 2003. This January, the DA-NAFC had reportedly given the PCARRD P5 million.

According to MIN project director Angelito Carpio, the success of MIN has encouraged the PCARRD to develop a portal that will serve the local banana industry, and eventually a long list of other commodities.

"We're thinking of expanding MIN to a Commodity Information Network (CIN), beginning with banana," Carpio said. Other high-value crops being lined up for the CIN vortals (vertical portals) are durian, coconut and ornamentals such as cut flowers.

Mango is the third top export commodity in Asia today, while banana is No. 1, according to Carpio.

The Web-based portal for the banana information network is expected for completion this year. The PCARRD is considering of partnering with the Southern Mindanao Agriculture and Resource, Research and Development Consortium, the regional offices of the DOST agency.

The PCARRD is currently collecting "basic information" for the BIN and is working on a physical and virtual manual on banana production, according to Carpio.

"In terms of research and development in agriculture, the Philippines tops in Asia," added Carpio. The PCARRD hopes to bring this expertise to the Web when it launches BIN this year.

## Mindanao identified as 3rd e-services hub in Philippines

DAVAO CITY—Acknowledging the potential benefits of information and communications technology (ICT) to the economic health of war-torn Mindanao, a local group of ICT professionals today indicated plans of extending Mindanao's agriculture, food processing and furniture industry to the global market.

In several resolutions signed during the first Mindanao ICT Congress on Thursday, the Mindanao Business Council (MBC), in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), hopes to make Mindanao the "third Philippine hub in e-services," next to Cebu and Metro Manila.

At least eight resolutions were signed, and each focused on issues the MBC and other groups aim to tackle in the coming years.

One resolution suggested the creation of a clear policy ensuring affordable access to information technology and the building up of an ICT infrastructure in the area. Local ICT players in Davao City are, for instance, banking on local Internet service provider Mosaic Communications Inc.'s rollout of broadband services this year.

At this time, there are 14 to 15 ISPs, and 562 cybercafés in Mindanao, according to Delia Moran Morados, regional director of DOST Region XI.

Morados said that a Department of Budget and Management circular allows local governments to allocate a portion of their budgets for ICT activities. As to how much is allocated, however, depends on each local government.

MINDANAO/ p.B12

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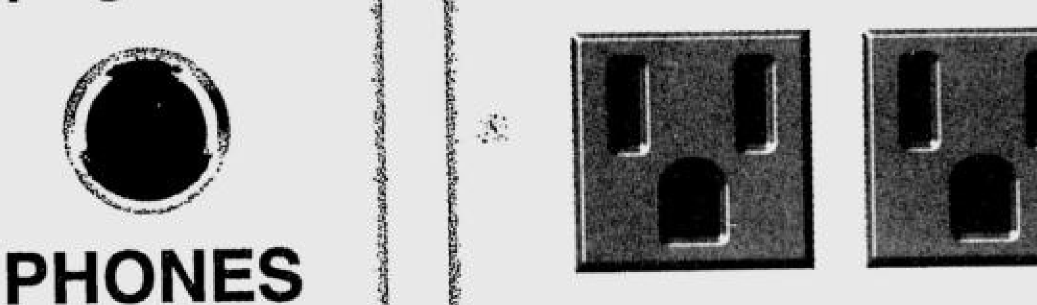

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# Yehey! founder resigns, looks at 'exit options'

By Joey G. Alarilla and
Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

ALISTAIR A. Israel, founder of local search engine and portal Yehey.com, has resigned from the dotcom he established with four other young individuals. Yehey! is one of the first dotcoms to successfully attract funding in the Philippines.

According to Israel, he has been on a "sabbatical leave" from the company since Dec. 15. He added that Yehey! founding vice president David Q. Quitoriano already left the company last September.

Saying that he is still young and would like to try out new things, Israel said that he and the other original founders would just like to look at their exit options from Yehey! He said that this is not a situation unique to Yehey! but is true of all dotcoms.

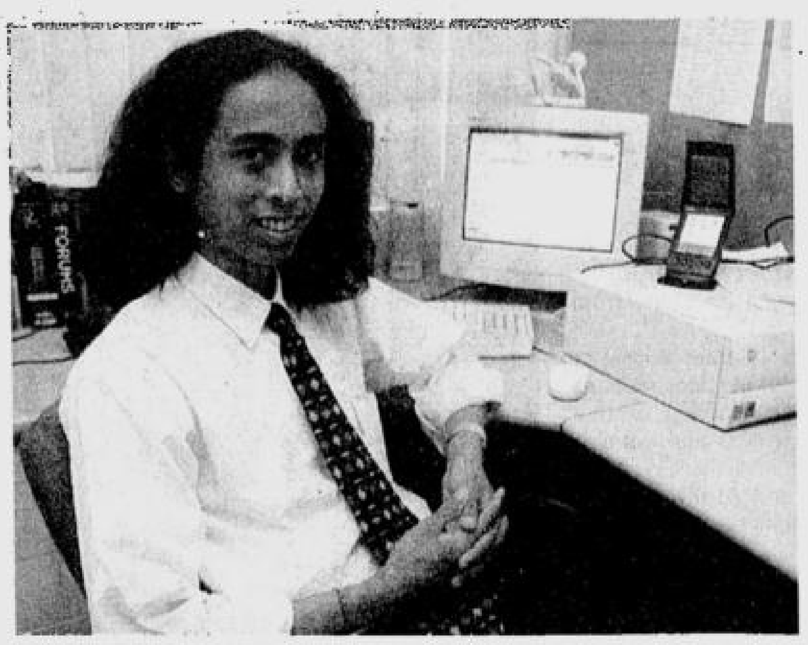
"Maybe we would like to have funds for a new company. Since it's highly unlikely that we'll still see an exit in the form of new investment or an IPO (initial public offering) any time soon, we're looking at our other options," Israel said.

He stressed, however, that this is no reflection of the business viability of Yehey!

"I don't think that it's a question of being viable but is just the general dotcom trend. Even though the business climate is expected to improve with the new (Macapagal) administration, I don't think that the dotcom hype is going to come back," Israel said. "I think at this point, anyone and everyone would like to make money out of dotcoms, not just us. We're not exactly selling, but we're just looking at our options."

In a separate interview, Yehey! chair and chief executive officer Dave de Leon said that he also received the same explanation from Israel last Thursday.

"We had a long talk," De Leon added. "In every dotcom, you get to a certain point where you have to give way to professional managers. (Yehey! founders) feel like *tapos na ang panahon nila*, (their time has passed)," the executive added.


ISRAEL. What went wrong?

De Leon said that Israel's resignation indicates that he is no longer part of Yehey!'s management team.

"But he is still a shareholder. We might one day report to him," De Leon said. He added that "arguments within an organization happen at certain times," but stressed that the founders did not resign because of a sour relationship with management.

De Leon quelled rumors that the local search engine and portal is for sale.

"Yehey.com is not for sale. I really wonder where the rumor started. I'm not aware of such plans by our partners to sell," De Leon said.

An earlier rumor had it that Singapore-based Catcha.com, facing financial difficulties, was looking at selling off its stake in Yehey!

Yehey.com is currently owned and operated by WS Computer Publishing Corp., Singapore-based Catcha Group, iVantage Corp. and the five original founders of Yehey!

According to De Leon, information technology (IT) investment company iVantage today controls 83 percent of Yehey.com. He is currently president of i-Vantage Corp.

"If there is any selling (of stocks), it would be a minor one. It would be just part of the company. I'm speaking for the three major blocs in the company," he added.

De Leon said that current shareholders in the company "have the right of first refusal" should any shareholders decide to divest of their shares. He explained that the founders could sell their stocks only after current shareholders refuse to buy their stakes in the company.

Israel confirmed this "right of first refusal."

YEHEY!/ p.B13

# From electronic wallets to virtual gift certificates

IMAGINE shopping in a nearby retail store armed with only a mobile phone.

Seems far out but that is what Smart Communications Inc. hopes to allow you to do in the next few months with its mobile commerce service called Smart Money. Smart Money is a service created out of the partnership of Smart and MasterCard International.

Stretching the idea of Smart's electronic wallet, where money resides in the network of the telephone operator, the company is coming out soon with pre-loaded cards that will work only for a select retail shop or merchant.

Borrowing the idea from paper-based gift certificates, Smart is currently developing this mobile gift certificate service with undisclosed large merchants in the Philippines, according to Dan Ibarra, senior vice president for E-services of Smart Mobile Commerce.

Smart Money was launched late last year. Ibarra said that the company has sold at least 55,000 Smart Money cards, mostly in Metro Manila. The company aims to hit 1 million by yearend.

Currently, Smart Money is an electronic wallet in which subscribers can store money by opening an account with First e-Bank. Ibarra indicated that by early second quarter of 2001, others banks—which are now part of Smart's mobile banking service via Short Message Service (SMS) or text messaging—will become dealers of the company's electronic wallet. These banks include Metrobank, iBank, Unionbank and East West Bank.

Smart is also looking at expanding Smart Money to the Web.

Ibarra said that the company will soon accredit local merchant websites who will sign up for Smart Money.

Subscribers may be able to purchase goods and services using Smart Money. When a purchase is made, the user is prompted to key in a personal identification number (PIN) to authenticate any purchase and ensure security of transactions, according to Ibarra.

For non-accredited websites, Ibarra said that Smart is working on creating a "virtual Smart Money account," which is connected to MasterCard's global network. So any purchase made by subscribers, say, on Amazon.com, will pass through MasterCard's network and then to Smart.

Smart, in turn, allows them to authenticate the purchase.

Ibarra added that users even have the option to "block or unblock" their virtual accounts in every online transaction they make. A good analogy for this mechanism is opening or closing a faucet. Whenever users need to make a purchase, they should first unblock (open the faucet) their virtual accounts. Then, they have to key in their PIN to authenticate the purchase. Finally, they have to block (close the faucet) to close the virtual account. This ensures a secure purchase.

Smart Money is not limited to mobile shopping. Smart has developed a way to allow its pre-paid subscribers to reload money into their account, do mobile banking and pay their bills, among others.

"Smart Money is hoping to be the universal medium to access all bank services," Ibarra added. The present banking population in the country right now is 19 million.

At this time, Smart Money is only available in the Philippines. *Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva*

# Mindanao . . .

(From page B11)

Morados acknowledged that the current pressing problem in Mindanao is the lack of ICT infrastructure and IT professionals that are often lost to brain drain. The final resolution passed during the Mindanao ICT Congress aims to solve these brain drain problems.

Thus, a resolution was drafted to address human resource development through a partnership with the DOST and the private sector. At least six e-learning hubs should be established for each region of Mindanao.

Another resolution urged government to increase the budget in basic and advance education related to ICT in Mindanao. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Commission on Higher Education, DOST, DTI and the private sector are expected to be players in this area. *Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva*

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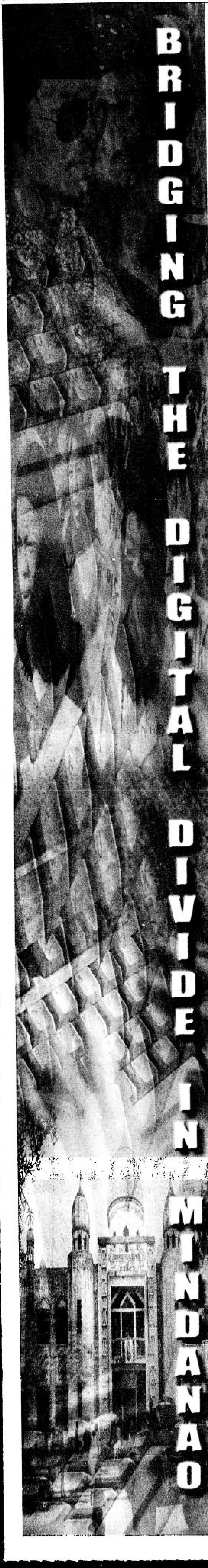

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN MINDANAO

# Wiring Mindanao

(From page B11)

tal" that will sell products and services unique to Mindanao. He said that Mindanao could start off selling products and services in agricultural, food processing and furniture industry.

"What I'm hoping is that the (task force) will find a way to get the medium-scale businesses to join the large companies in the transactional portal," Lazatin said.

He also pointed out that Mindanao, particularly Davao City, should also create enough infrastructure for the transport of physical goods to the Asian market.

Davao, he said, is currently limited to transporting goods by sea. If it wants to be a hub for e-services, it also needs to work on transporting goods by air, Lazatin said.

Lazatin admitted that the resolutions passed during the ICT Congress in Mindanao are still general in nature. He said private and government sectors should collaborate in putting up more realistic goals that can later be presented to the President.

He advised that the resolutions passed during the Mindanao ICT Congress need to be fine-tuned in a way that budgetary allocations and a schedule of implementation of each plans would be specified.

Lazatin also urged that the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) allocate funds for ICT activities in Mindanao. A DBM circular allows local governments to allocate a portion of their budgets for ICT activities. As to how much is allocated, however, depends on each local government, according to DOST officials in Mindanao.

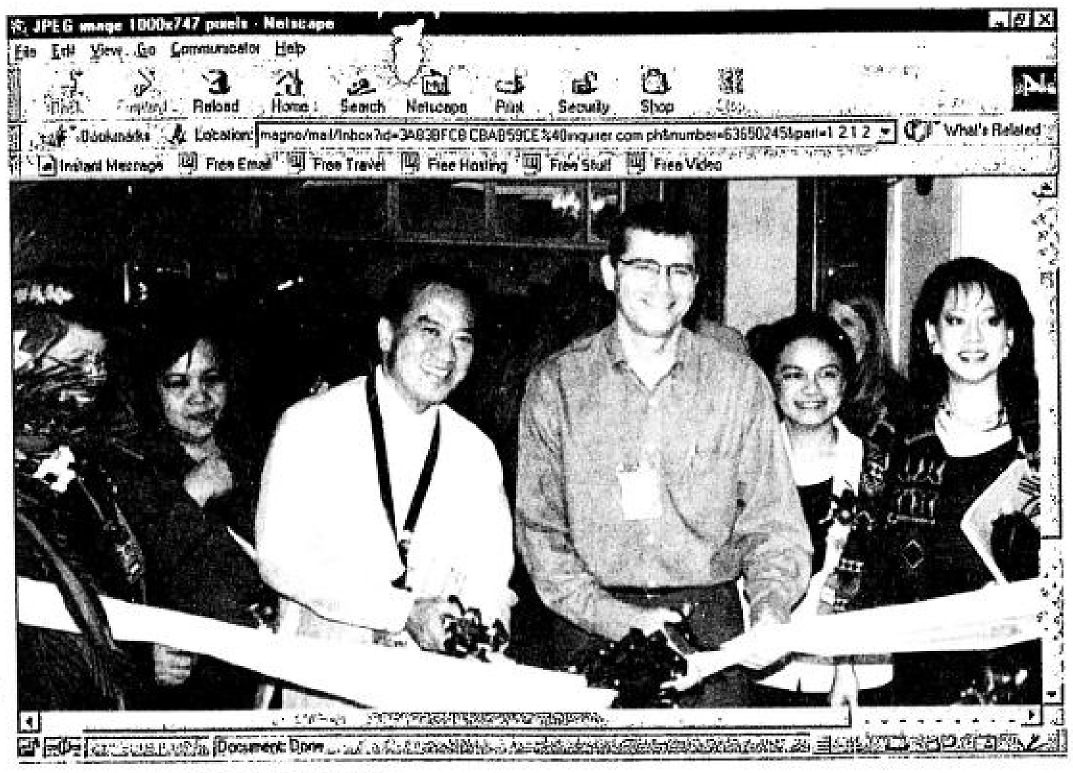
## Education

Local officials present during the Mindanao ICT Congress also pointed out that the current pressing problem in Mindanao, aside from the poor ICT infrastructure, is brain drain.

According to the NCC Mindanao report, there are 146 public and private schools offering IT degree courses in Mindanao. These courses include BS in Computer Science, in Computer Engineering, in Information Technology, Associate in Computer Science, and in Computer Technology, to name a few.

Commission on Higher Education records indicate that out of the 23,933 total number of enrollees in IT courses for school year 1999-2000 in Mindanao, only 3,010 students were able to graduate.

"Some of the curricula being offered in some training institutions are not really appropriately designed to produce quality and competitive graduates attuned to the latest trends and developments in ICT and with keen awareness of the particular needs of their regions," a report from the NCC Mindanao stated.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**MINDANAO IT CONGRESS**
Department of Science and Technology Undersecretary Leopoldo Lazatin (third from left) leads the ribbon cutting ceremony at the opening of the First Mindanao Information and Communications Technology Congress in Davao City on Feb. 8. The two-day event is aimed at developing a knowledge-based economy in Mindanao. With Lazatin are (from left) Ma. Delia Moran-Morados, DOST-XI regional director; engineer Merly Cruz, Department of Trade and Industry Region XI director; Charles Feibel, USAID-GEM Program chief of party; Joji Daway, USAID-Philippines development assistance specialist; and Joji-Ilagan Bian, Mindanao Business Council chair.

The government-run Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) had been conducting technical courses in IT literacy in various regions in Mindanao. The agency was able to produce 2,378 graduates in IT-related courses.

The DOST and MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology last year also forged a partnership for the setting up of a Virtual Center for Technology Innovation in Information Technology hub in the city.

A resolution was passed during the congress with the hope that the lack of quality IT professionals in Mindanao can be addressed. The resolution will focus on human resource development through a partnership with the DOST and the private sector. At least six e-learning hubs will be established for each region of Mindanao.

Related to this, another resolution urges government to increase the budget in basic and advance education related to ICT in Mindanao. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the CHED, DOST, DTI and the private sector are expected to be players in this area.

## Third hub

The government wants to make Mindanao the "third hub in e-services" for the Philippines. Some observers based in Mindanao, however, find this label "unfair" and a bit degrading because it creates another invisible demarcation in the country that is literally made up of thousands of islands.

"Like the Internet, there should be no distinctions between the various regions in the country," a Cebu-based netrepreneur remarked.

---

# Yehey . . .

(From page B12)

"Which is why we cannot really say that we are selling. We have to approach the company shareholders first and it's only when they don't buy that we can approach possible outside buyers," Israel said.

Israel confirmed De Leon's statement that the original founders now control less than 20 percent of Yehey! Apart from Israel and Quitoriano, the original founders include Ramon Borja, Voltaire Trinidad and Julius J. Alba. Israel, however, said that most of the original founders have already left the company.

Israel and his [illegible] es established Ye [illegible] n 1997, with Fiesta [illegible] ne Corp. as the corp [illegible] te vehicle. In 1998 [illegible] e founders entered into a joint venture with WS Computer Publishing Corp. This created WS Fiesta Online Corp., an Internet consulting firm specializing in Internet marketing, website production and promotion and media brokerage.

Israel confirmed that the original founders did not receive any cash for themselves from the WS Computer merger, but instead opted to retain shares in Yehey! He said that the original founders retained a 30-percent stake in the merged firm.

In 1999, WS Fiesta Online Corp. received further capital infusion from Singapore's Catcha.com. A new company called Yehey! Corp. Pte. Ltd. was formed.

Asked why he has decided to leave the company he founded, Israel said that they are not really leaving in the sense that they still have a good working relationship with WS owner William Chua.

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## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

### CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

#### PASIG

SACRIFICE SALE 5.2M Phoenix Hts 3BR 4121825

#### QUEZON CITY

Cubao CondoP1.3M EZterm 9126976/9132224/4381480

4Dr Apt. Nr. Sm FV QC 2892895

Loyola Hts Twnhse 3stry 3BRFA185m² 5.1M 8439211

Motel/Lodge 2sty LA4793 P199M No.Divrsn 8439211

NEW MANILA • Impressive 2&3br • 8718743/0919-8378988

Nova P5T/mo.10yrs 9390299

#### SAN JUAN

Horsehoe Twnhses 7Unit FA248-310 P8M 843-9211

LPL Ghills 52m² P3.3M 8316785

#### PROVINCIAL

Brentville Laguna 165m² 3BR 9M/Rent/55T 4121825

RUSH SALE: Baguio Condo 49M back of Burnham Park Ina Mansion Kisad Rd 1 4M •872-8665 565-0805• •Pager 1481783876•

## REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

### APARTMENT

#### MAKATI

2BR Tel Grg nr B'dla 8443622

#### QUEZON CITY

**RES'L APTS**
1)DNDrive Tallpapa near Baker's E & Makro 2)Del Nacia nr Sauyo Elem sch 3743637;3743175;3744265

#### SAN JUAN

2Stry 2Br 10 Padilla San Juan w/Grg P8T 724-6396

2BR San Juan 9251348/49; 9206694

### HOUSE

#### RIZAL

Antipolo w/H²O Electricity, Phone 671-6476 / 696-1787 Steve

### CONDO/TWNHSE

#### MANILA

Condo Alpha Salcedo 1BR Parking Phone Semi-Frnsh P35T/mo. (0917)928-0477

#### PASIG

Shaw Twr 1BR 12T 425m² 4121825 150341394

Ortigas Cntr 1br Unfurn 2br Furn 433-7159 / 0919-2099420

#### QUEZON CITY

**P5,500/mo.CUBAO**
**P6,500/mo.Malate**
Call 911-3361 / 522-6648

### FOR LEASE

1400m² lot w/400m² Mindanao Ave - warehouse with Office 9291863/ 09175255919

CALLE Industria Libis Rent P50/sqm/mo 843-9211

Warehouse Nr SM Fairview Camarin 1500m² & Up Tel. 244-9622 Bpr. 150373622

### ROOM & BOARD

Near DLSU/Quirino Ave. Call 523-5465 / 523-8761

### BEDSPACE

**P975/mo. AIRCON**
Cubao 911-3361; 926-4072

## REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

### BEDSPACE

Lady Bed Space Kapitolyo Pasig 0918-8984703

### LOAN & MORTGAGE

2 % Wut taking Car 3677523/24

Fast Loan R/Estate & Car Financing Avail 4154936

### BUSINESS RENTAL

**P1,800/mo Stalls**
Malate T-400-6420/23
Sn Pedro Lag 8086006/07

Comml Space Pref Billiards 172m² A.Tuazon Ave Mkna Tel 645-2789 / 682-0541

•ORTIGAS ofc units 40 50 80 100 150 200up 4121825

NO FLOOD MALABON 361-0652

SAN MIGUEL AVENUE ORTIGAS CENTER Approx 90/145/275/350m² Call Joy at 631-7803

TEKTITE 110sqm 2420922

### RESORT

PansolHotSpringPrvt 776-7507

## TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

### CARS

#### KIA

97Besta2.2 200T 3739938

Ceres 1996 P110T Dropside Nw Tires 6458678

#### MAZDA

96 Mazda 626 A/T White 235T Neg Tel#897-9231 to 46 Loc. 1130 or 1114

#### MITSUBISHI

Galant 99 VR6 A/T Silver 0917-8192224 / 931-8609

#### NISSAN

90 Maxima A1 All-Power 115T 0919-6345092 / 928-4668

#### TOYOTA

2000 CRLA XE 468T Pwr Strg / Lck / Wdw 7TKm T-718-0204

#### OTHER CAR BRANDS

Other Cars/Imported 98 Grand Cherokee, V8 5.2 ltr, P1.7M Call 8106355/8485116/6780453

### BUSES/TRUCKS

NKR NPR Canter Carry FB Porter Lite-T-Ace Bongo Dump Mixer Cargo A. Van 4-6-10w 9126976; 9120647

mazda NISSAN HONDA
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3 months guaranteed work
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35 West Ave, Quezon City
115 Mindanao Ave, Quezon City
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## TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

### CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

Starex, L300, Coaster Bus Cars 637-7396 631-3496

Bnew L300 8254058 8261045

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

CARS•VANS•8978113•8955888 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8969956

HIACE L300 URVAN 8257135

L300 T 4161105 / 7411356

L300 VV (Roger) 578-8917

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

UDrive w/dri Cars/L300/ MB/4x4/Bus 18667-69

## TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

### CARS FOR RENT

MB E200 4535288;9296250

•Car;Vans4535288;9296250

With driver or self drive brand new cars, L-300, Vans, Coasters and Buses, pls call GST&T at numbers: 5516889/8312096/8310245 and 8310246 Cecille.

### WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

### CAR LOAN

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3670169

1.5% w/o taking car OR/CR R/EstateLoan LO%4154936

2% w/o taking car 7262780

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### HOME APPLIANCE

Carrier 3ton Packg type slim, 35T 99gree 3ton packg type 36T 5ton 99 Alinaire 55T Good as New #10 Xavierville Ave QC 9219465

SONY WEGA Brand New TV 21" P15,800 Call 8205702

### PETS

• GS Pups Adult Imports • http://www.dogtracker.com /glaserball Call 433-0418

AM Cocker Reg/Shots Art 8531181

Basset PUP M/F 656-6918

DACHSUND PUPS 2¼mos text0919-5524541 P5000T@

Shitzu F 15T 9176500920

Toy Terrier Pups 928-2036

### SPORTING GOODS

Billiard P25T & P30T All Marble Top New 781-9453

B.Table B'new/Accessories •(02)8014494/8020566•

Imported Billiards complete ACC Free Delivery & Install'n 8618714 to 16; 5657816; 8613123

STRIKEMASTER Bowling & Billiards Sales & Rentals T-9341569

### WANTED TO BUY

**BUYING ROLEX**
others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

BUYING SELLING FULLY PAID EDUPLAN ICHU Tel# 805-0177 • 0917-7920369

H.S./COLLEGE PLAN G Lopez 7137284

**ROLEX**
Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair Tel# 804-0484 • 834-2886

### MISCELLANEOUS

NIKON FT w/lens & flash P8000 Eric 645-0173

New Encyclopedia Sets Leather Bound Call 631-0204 or 0917-8931657 for details

**Nikon**
F2 F4 Body Tamron 28-200, 200-400 Lens T40 Call 892-3381 / 812-8418

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### MALE

ARCH'L & CONST. MGT. FIRM Needs the FF: 1. CAD Operators 2. 3D Program Operators 3. Civil Engineers Send resume to: P.O. Box 3350 MCPO, Mkt

### FEMALE

MAIDS Direct Hire 7284971

Promo For HIRE 724-3573

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Ideal as NGO or Project Offices
- Conveniently located in Quezon City
- 24-hour security
- With parking spaces, dormitory, cafeteria and meeting rooms

Call **Ping** or **Helen** at **4110605/4110606**
*Direct Lessees Only*

**CASIMIRO TOWNHOMES**
Habay, Bacoor, Cavite
near SM Bacoor
Initial DP: P15,000

**WESTVILLE HOMES**
Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite
Initial DP: P8,000
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Legaspi Village, Makati City
810-7297 810-6787
871-8318 810-7183
872-7603 810-8019
873-0787
Welcome Brokers & Agents

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER JOBMarket ONLINE

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

**MA. FATIMA ARMAMENTO ALARCON**

This is to inform the public that **Mrs. Alarcon** of Sariaya, Quezon is no longer connected with the following establishments as of **January 19, 2001.**
**COTTA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORP. AND MP VENTURES INC.**
Any transaction beyond that date entered into by **Mrs. Alarcon** shall no longer be honored by the company.
(PDI – Feb 11 & 12, 2001)

## ANNOUNCEMENT

**Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective February 1, 2001 issue.**

### NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
(National Edition)

Box Ad - P230.00/col. cm.
Line Ad - P 65.00/line
Obituaries - P230.00/col. cm.

### JOB MARKET
(Metro Manila Edition)

Box Ad - P190.00/col. cm.

**Color Surcharge for NC and JM**
1 spot color - 30%
2 spot color - 60%
Full color - 80%

### CLASSIFIED ASSETS

Box Ad - P190.00/col. cm.
- No color surcharge

*** Rates are VAT exclusive**

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### FEMALE

FACIAL & BODY CENTER Needs the FF: 1. Consultants 2. Therapists 3. Reflexologists 4. Nursing graduates. Send resume to: P.O. Box 3350, MCPO, Mkt.

Pre-Sch. Tcher w/Knowledge on L.D.&Sped Call Dr. Umali Tel#s 723-5265; 721-9227 / 28

### MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T-5280722

Graphic Artist 722-2267

Office Staff 913-4470 Sol

Psychometrecian & Nurse Tel. 302-1128

RUSH COOK W/ EXP IN CANTEEN/CATERING CALL 524-3818 / 522-9183

URGENT OFFICE STAFF CALL MR JOSE AT 7366660

**TEACHERS!!!**
English, Math & Science and Principal for ZCK School 656-8119/655-7939

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### AUCTION SALE

YUPANGCO PAWNSHOP, INC. Pledges as of July - Aug. '00 will be auctioned at the ff. offices: Blk. 2-K 2nd Flr. Galleria Baclaran Taft Ave., PC-Feb. 20 '01- 8:30AM; 200 Zapote Bacoor Cavite-Feb. 20 '01 - 2:00PM; Apt. 5 South Superhighway Alabang Muntinlupa MM-Feb. 27 '01 8:30AM J. Flor-Auctioneer

### BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

TELEMARKETING 2477469

4 Sale Parlor Right Eqpts. Valley I Sucat Pque nr church Sheila 09174996012

Brokers Agents P100K/mo Prime New Location QC 633-9662 / 7463525 / 7460281

•EARN FR HOME 8531008•

ESSENTIAL SEMINAR on Feb. 17, 2001 at Dusit Hotel Mkti FOR THOSE WHO INTEND TO WORK ABROAD Phone: 891 5602 & 891 5632

Established Hotel Laundry Bus. 500T 09193447658

Established Video Shop Exclu Condo 09193447658

JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIGN Term Must be Employed 2778166

**MLM GROUNDFLOOR**
Be a pioneer in the 1st Filipino; global e-com MLM business. Company launching on March 1 '01 visit www.louiesantos.dinodev.com Call 0917 3700022

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

RTW Factory Price 7299681

TRAVEL OPPOR 893-7903

TShirt Fac.Price 4383147

### LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JOSE Z. BAJARIAS was extrajudicially settled and adjudicated among his heirs executed and ratified before Atty. Nestor C. Rivera Notary Public as per Doc No. 536; Page No. 108; Book No. 39; Series of 2001 of his Notary Register.
(PDI-Feb. 5, 12 & 19,2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONARDO B. MANUEL who died in state on March 20 2000 in QC has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc #6258 Page #53 Book #CCCII Series of 2000 before Not Public Hector P. Reyes of Marikina.
(PDI-Feb. 5, 12 &19, 2001)

### NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the Loss of Metro Stock Certificate No. A-0100 under the name of Mr. Justo Sy. If no one contest after one (1) year new certificate will be issued.
(PDI-Feb. 5, 12 &19, 2001)

**MANNING AGENCY** to be established soon at Manila to recruit seamen for dry cargo and tanker vessels requires:

**GENERAL MANAGER** with good managerial skills and with good experience in related position.

**CHIEF ACCOUNTANT** with adequate academic qualifications and experience in similar position.

**DOCUMENTATION MANAGER/P.O.E.A. LIAISON** with related experience and knowledge.

**SECRETARY** with excellent English and qualifications including computer word/excel etc.

*Full C.V. with photo and reference letter to be mailed to:*

**P.O. BOX 13444, Ortigas Center Post Office**
**Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.**

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**PHILIPPINE HANSE SHIP AGENCY, INC.**
LICENSE NO. 102-00-001900-R VALID UNTIL: 25SEP2002
POEA ACC. NO. 19155-11 VALID UNTIL: 09AUG2001
ISO9002 Certificate No. 953575

**FOR FEBRUARY & MARCH DEPLOYMENT**

**FOR LPG VESSEL**

**MASTER**
**CHIEF ENGINEER**
**SECOND OFFICER**
**ABLE BODIED SEAMAN**
**CHIEF COOK**

**FOR LPG VESSEL** - NIS REGISTER

**BOATSWAIN**
**FITTER**
**ORDINARY SEAMAN**

**YOU MAY APPLY IN PERSON FROM 0900 - 1800 FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY AND 0900 - 1200 ON SATURDAY AT:**

**GERMANAVIS COURT**
**Evangelista cor. Gen. Tinio Sts., Bangkal, Makati City**
or
**YOU MAY TRANSMIT YOUR BIO-DATA THRU FAX NO: 889-2707 or BY EMAIL: PHILHANS@TRI-ISYS.COM**

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NO FEES TO BE CHARGED TO ALL APPLICANTS
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NEEDED IMMEDIATELY

## GENERAL MANAGER

FOR

**Marinduque Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
**(MARELCO)**
**Ihatub, Boac, Marinduque**

**Qualifications:**
Applicant may be male or female, must be at least 30 but not more than 55 years old, college graduate (in Business Management, Accounting/Finance, Engineering or Behavioral Sciences) preferably with Master's degree in Business Management Administration or Industrial Management, and must have at least five (5) years supervisory experience.

**STARTING SALARY: P15,000.00**
Application forms and additional information may be obtained at the Cooperative Operations Department, 3rd Floor, NFA Building, NIA Road, Government Center, Diliman, Quezon City, or at the Regional Electrification Office IV, Parian, Calamba, Laguna. Deadline for submission of application forms is on **05 March 2001**.

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### NOTICE OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT

Public notice is hereby given of an extra-judicial settlement of the Estate of **Espedito N. Pison** executed by the sole heirs, namely: **Concepcion A. Pison, Elizabeth P. Kotorman, Jose Edmundo A. Pison, Ma. Rosa P. Lizares, Salud P. Villanueva and Catherine A. Pison**, affecting personal properties. Instrument was ratified before Notary Public Jose Ma. Torres, as Doc. No. 437, Page No. 88, Book No. XXIII, Series of 1985.

(PDI – Feb. 5, 12 & 19, 2001)

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Unit 411 Perla Mansion Condominium
C. Palanca St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Mondays to Fridays 8:00 - 11:00 AM only.
**NO PROCESSING FEES.**

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Republic of the Philippines
**CITY OF CALOOCAN**
**SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD**

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The public is hereby notified by the City Government of Caloocan that the Committees on Urban Planning, Parks and Playgrounds, Laws, Real Estate and Subdivision of the Sangguniang Panlungsod will hold the final public hearings on the Proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance of the City of Caloocan on February 20, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the North Caloocan City Hall (Bukid Area) and on February 23, 2001 at Bulwagang Katipunan, Caloocan City Hall (Main) at 2:00 p.m.

The business sector, non-government organizations and people organizations, local officials and other interested entries are enjoined to share their views, opinions and disagreement, if any, on the proposed measure at the above-mentioned dates and venues.

(Sgd.) **Hon. EDGARDO "EGAY" ERICE**
*Councilor-Chairman*
*Committee on Laws*

(PDI – Feb. 5, 12 & 19, 2001)

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Republic of the Philippines
**PROVINCE OF QUEZON**
**MUNICIPALITY OF GENERAL LUNA**
**OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR**
Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project

1898 - 1998
100
KALAYAAN

## INVITATION TO BID

**Date: February 12, 2001**
World Bank/IBRD Loan No. 4109-PH

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the *Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDP)* and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract No. 0033101SI-Q for the **Construction of Hingoso Bridge with 0.695 km. Road located at San Isidro Ibaba ARC, General Luna, Quezon.** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loan and IDA Credits.

The Municipality of General Luna and implementing partner of the DAR for ARCDP invite sealed bids from eligible bidders for the construction of the following sub-project:

| Item No. | Work Breakdown Structure | Quantity |
|---|---|---|
| | **Bridge Component** | |
| 100 | Clearing & Grubbing | 196.00 sq.m. |
| 103 | Structure Excavation | 470.00 cu.m. |
| 400-a | RC Pile Casting | 288.00 ln.m. |
| 400-b | RC Pile Driving | 288.00 ln.m. |
| 401 | Concrete Railing | 90.00 ln.m. |
| 403 | Metal Structure | 326.06 kgs. |
| 404 | Reinforcing Steel Bars | 21,388.85 cu.m. |
| 405 | Structural Concrete | 170.00 cu.m. |
| 411 | Painting | 130.00 sq.m. |
| 505 | Stone Masonry | 2,720.00 cu.m. |
| Spl. A | Timber Crane way | 30. ln.m. |
| Spl. B | Bunkhouse | 1.00 unit |
| | **Road Component** | |
| 100 | Clearing and Grubbing | 3,732.48 cu.m. |
| 102 | Roadway and Drainage Excavation | 1,833.00 cu.m. |
| 102-a | Muck Excavation | 874.27 cu.m. |
| 104 | Embankment | 3,199.75 cu.m. |
| 105 | Subgrade Preparation | 4,170.00 sq.m. |
| 200 | Aggregate Sub-Base Course | 417.00 cu.m. |
| 201 | Aggregate Base Course | 310.80 cu.m. |
| 311 | Portland Cement Concrete Pavement | 708.00 sq.m. |
| 500 | Pipe Culvert & Storm Drain | 63.00 ln.m. |
| 504 | Grouted Riprap | 54.00 cu.m. |
| SPL | Boulders Fill | 875.00 cu.m. |

**Bid Security** : P170,000.00
**Bid Closing Date** : March 12, 2001, 2:00 p.m.
**Project Duration** : 174 Calendar Days

**Minimum Equipment's Required**
One (1) unit Bulldozer-owned: One unit (1) Road Grader-owned; One (1) Unit Vibratory (15 ton min) Road Roller-owned: One (1) unit Loader-owned; three (3) units Dump Truck-owned; One (1) unit Water truck-owned. One unit Truck Mounted Crane with diesel hammer-owned/leased.

A complete set of bidding documents maybe purchase by interested bidders at above office starting **February 13, 2001**, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of three thousand five hundred pesos only (P3,500.00).

A Pre-bid Conference will be held on **March 1, 2001** at 2:00 p.m. at the Municipal Mayor's Office.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in a form of cash, Certified Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft, or its equivalent in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to the Office of the Municipal Mayor, General Luna, Quezon Province on or before the above bid closing date. Bids will be opened promptly on the above bid closing date in the presence of participating bidders or representatives who choose to attend.

The PBAC-ARCDP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expense that they incur in the preparation of bid to accept the bid lowest evaluated, responsive and complying bid.

(Sgd.) **HON. ANA F. GAMOGAMO**
*Chairman PBAC-ARCDP*

(PDI - Feb 12, 2001)

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Republika ng Pilipinas
**Pambansang Pangasiwaan ng Patubig**
(NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION)
Lungsod ng Quezon

## Invitation to Bid

**Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Various Electricity Revenue Meters**

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) invites interested manufacturers of their duly authorized distributors to participate in the tendering of Various Electricity Revenue Meters for the Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power Project (CMPP) as follows:

Six (6) units Current Transformers
Six (6) units Potential Transformers
Two (2) units KWH Meter, Multi Function
Two (2) units Test Block/Test Switch

Interested bidders may obtain bid documents starting **February 7-14, 2001** upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000) at the Procurement Division, Ground Floor, NIA Bldg., Diliman, Quezon City, Tel. Nos. 921-3906 and 922-4768.

A Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **21 February 2001**, 2:00 PM at the Conference Room of the Asst. Administrator for Administrative Services, Ground Floor, NIA Bldg., Quezon City.

Bids shall be opened on **06 March**, 2:00 PM at the same venue. Failure to attend the Pre-Bid Conference will automatically disqualify the bidders.

The NIA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare the bidding a failure or waive any or all informalities or to award such bids to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ISIDRO R. DIGAL**
*Chairman, BAC-B*

(PDI – Feb. 5 & 12, 2001)

**MAKE A CAREER CHOICE ONLINE.**

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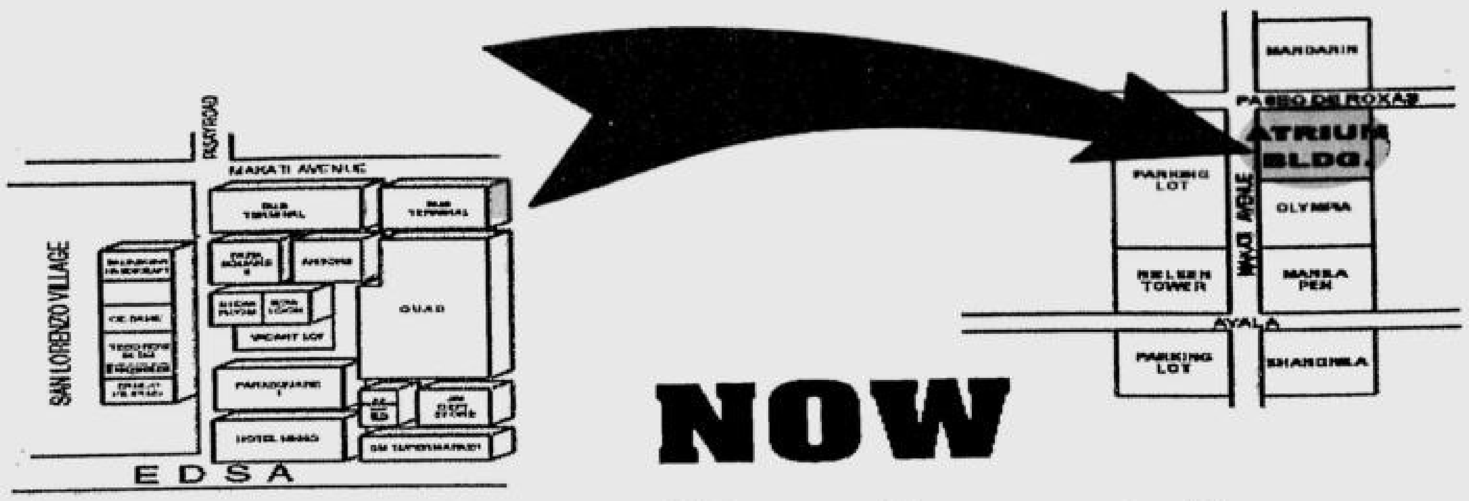
# Inquirer's Makati Branch



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**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**
**Ground Floor, Atrium Bldg.,**
**Makati Avenue,**
**Makati City**
**New Tel. Nos. 811-4370 / 811-4361**
**811-4012 / 892-5578**

---

# Sweet Nothings

This Valentine season, tell the world how much that special someone means to you—by writing that heartfelt love note in the widest read and circulated broadsheet in the Philippines.

The INQUIRER now accepts personal ads for the Feb. 14-issue dedicated especially to those you hold dearest to your heart, at a discounted rate of **P55** per line or **P165** per col. cm.

Visit or call any Inquirer Classified Ads branch now for more details.

**Main Office** - 897-8808 loc. 516 / 514
**Atrium of Makati** - 811-4361 / 811-4370
**SM Megamall** - 635-0219 / 20
**Kalaw** - 528-0213 / 527-3342
**Cubao** - 912-9008 to 11
**Alabang**-850-6465

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☎912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6372008 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
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**Monday to Sunday**
12:00 noon
Day before publication

---

## *Ana Maria Lopez Araneta Santos Ocampo*

*June 22, 1932 - February 11, 2001*

*Died peacefully in the Grace of the Lord*
*on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes*
*on February 11, 2001.*

Her husband **Antonino Santos Ocampo**; children **Antonino** and **Rory Uson**, **Victor John** and **Grace Garcia**, **Victoria**, **Salvador**, **Amie**; grandchildren **Kimberly**, **Stephanie**, and **Nikki**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Carmen** and **Jose Segovia**, **Ma. Victoria** and **Jose S. Concepcion, Jr.**, **Ma. Lina** and **Danilo H. Santiago**, **Ma. Regina** and **Enrique J. Teodoro.**

Her remains lie in state at Capilla De San Francisco Santuario De San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment to be announced later.

---

❁ In Loving Memory of ❁

## Gov. Eunice Guerrero-Cucueco

**Province of Aurora**

*On her tenth death anniversary*
Sept. 16, 1949 – Feb. 12, 1991

*Mom, today marks a decade of fond reminiscing*
*Of honoring you and thinking of you constantly*
*You remain a vibrant part of our lives, an incomparable blessing*
*Daily we treasure your love*
*Always we cherish your memory*

---

**"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."**

John 3:16

---

**"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."**

2 Cor. 5:8

---

*Our Beloved Mama*

## GERTRUDEZ CRUZ VICTORIA

*Now peacefully rest in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord.*

March 17, 1932 -- February 10, 2001

Her loving husband **Rufino "Butch"**; bereaved children **Maricris** and **Freddy**; **Judith**; and **John**; grandchildren **Maika**, **Maureen** and **Marla**; sister **Priscilla C. Alimagno**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body now lies in the state at the family residence at 264 Rosario Subdivision, Sala, Cabuyao, Laguna.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 14, 2001, 3 p.m. at Cabuyao Municipal Cemetery after the 2 p.m. Mass at the St. Policarpe Parish, Cabuyao, Laguna.

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*Message of Thanks*

We,
the family of the late

## FLORENCIA G. LIM

wish to thank all of you who, by way of your presence,
prayers, thoughts & flowers, offered us solace and comfort.
We also thank you for joining us in
remembering them, who in so many ways,
have touched our lives forever.

**God bless you!**

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Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

## RUPERTA I. DE ASIS

*Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 04, 2001*

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

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INQUIRER

# TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

## Monkey wrench

***Q.*** How did the monkey wrench get that name?

***A.*** A monkey wrench is a hand tool with one moveable jaw, adjusted by a screw to fit various sizes of nuts, etc. For a long time, since 1856, it was believed that this instrument got its name from a man credited with its invention, Charles Moncke, a London blacksmith. According to the traditional attribution, the inventor's name was pronounced "monkey" because the true name of the inventor was not generally known. The *Boston Transcript* rebutted this English theory by reporting, in 1932-1933, an investigation that proved that the inventor of the monkey wrench was not a Britisher, but an American named Monk (first name not given) who had been employed by Bemis and Call of Springfield, Massachusetts. In support of this accreditation is the date of Monk's invention, 1856, two years before the term monkey wrench, as noted in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, first appeared in print. In addition, the English call a monkey wrench a spanner.

**For the Record.** The world's noisiest animals are the howler monkeys of South and Central America. Their fearsome screeches have been described as a cross between the bark of a dog and the bray of an ass increased a thousand times.

***Ooops!*** If by a tree one means a plant with a woody trunk that survives from one season to the next, then there is no such thing as a banana tree. Bananas do not grow on trees but rather develop on very large herbs. A banana 'tree' does not, in fact, have roots but a rhizome. What appears to be its trunk is actually made up of very large leaves in tubular configuration.

### WORD WATCH

**Latundan** or **latundal** : said to be named for Claude Letoundal, a French missionary from India who introduced the banana variety into the Philippines.

PDI – February 12, 2001

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# Equitable draws new suitor, says BSP chief

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

ANOTHER foreign bank is looking for a local partner to acquire a stake in Equitable PCI Bank Inc., the country's third biggest lender, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura has said.

"There are quite a number of banks interested. I heard there is a new foreign bank interested," Buenaventura told reporters.

He also said Bank of the Philippine Islands and Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., the country's No. 1 and No. 2 banks, were still interested in acquiring a stake in Equitable. DBS Group Holdings Ltd., parent of Southeast Asia's biggest bank by assets, owns 20 percent of BPI.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said Equitable's financial advisers, JP Morgan Chase & Co. and ING Barings LLC, have until March to look for a foreign or local partner.

Equitable is seeking a partner that will put in new capital and improve its capital adequacy ratio.

Reyes said JP Morgan and ING Barings have until next month to find a partner.

Equitable's three biggest stockholders last month planned to sell their combined 67-percent stake after the bank's chair, George Go, resigned in December and depositors withdrew a large amount of money last year because of the bank's links with ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Estrada was accused of using several accounts in Equitable to launder millions of dollars in payoffs from illegal gambling.

The bank, however, also provided key pieces of evidence and a witness that linked Estrada to the so-called Jose Velarde accounts. The accounts contained millions of pesos that prosecutors in the former president's impeachment trial said came from gambling syndicates.

Equitable's stock has fallen 8.5 percent since the start of the year, compared to the main index's 13-percent gain.

The Go family decided two weeks ago to hold on to their 30-percent stake in Equitable.

One person familiar with the matter said the family believed Equitable's negative image because of its association with Estrada had been lifted now that a new government under President Macapagal-Arroyo is in place.

The central bank reported that liquidity pressure that hit Equitable at the height of Estrada's impeachment trial had eased.

The bank was reported to have lost between P30 billion and P40 billion during the trial, with one industry source saying withdrawals reached P80 billion.

With the Go family's stake out of the selling bloc, however, BPI and Metrobank was reported earlier to have re-thought their plans to acquire Equitable.

Without the Go family's stake, Equitable can offer only the 37 percent held by state pension funds Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System.

BPI and Metrobank are seeking no less than a majority control.

Last week, however, the Equitable board convinced the Go family to sell a portion of their holdings in the bank.

Standard Chartered Plc, American International Group, and Banco Santander Central Hispano have denied reports they are interested in Equitable.

**Guoco**Holdings (Philippines), Inc.

**TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of Guoco Holdings (Philippines), Inc. will be held on 20 February 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the Penthouse, BA-Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

(Sgd.) Atty. Daisy L. Parker
Corporate Secretary

# ADB cancels future loans to Napocor

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

THE ASIAN Development Bank has refused to extend more loans to the National Power Corp. until Congress passes a bill to restructure the local energy sector.

In a letter to the Department of Finance, ADB country director Gunther Hecker said the ADB decided to suspend all financial assistance to Napocor.

Napocor has asked the ADB to again consider giving it loans even if it has failed to post an 8-percent return-on-rate-base, a measure of its profitability.

"Unfortunately, they (ADB) have indefinitely declined to grant us another waiver, which would really make it difficult for us to secure future borrowings," Napocor vice president for finance Antonio Ingco said in an interview.

Ingco said the ADB was underscoring the need for lawmakers to pass a power sector reform bill.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has scrapped discussions on this year's budget, deciding instead to pass a bill that will sell Napocor.

"She said there must be some decisions. I want a review, but the review should not drag on," Canlas quoted Ms Macapagal as saying.

"Decisions have already been made and I think we have moved forward on both the budget and the power bill," he said.

Without a new budget, the law automatically reenacts the previous year's plan. The last budget cut spending to P629 billion from as much as P725 billion, proposed by former President Joseph Estrada for this year.

"It's a blessing in disguise that the 2001 budget can no longer be passed," Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said. "We will just live on the basis of last year's budget."

Renewed focus on power sector legislation could end four years of deliberations. Ms Macapagal said earlier she would leave the controversial issue to the next Congress, which takes office on June 30.

The new power bill will deregulate the industry, breaking up and privatizing the debt-ridden Napocor. Napocor lost P11.9 billion last year and owes $6.5 billion.

"This legislature promised the bill would be ratified in this Congress," Canlas said. "It's almost a done deal so we're keeping our fingers crossed."

"Napocor's financial picture would look better if the bill is passed. If not, we would have to adjust our power rates," Napocor's Ingco said. ***With a report from Bloomberg***

# New oil player targets deals with Napocor

NEW oil player A. Brown Energy Inc. said Friday it would try its luck to win some of the P10.23 billion in fuel and diesel supply contracts of the National Power Corp.

A. Brown Energy is a joint venture between Canada's Tracer Petroleum Corp. and local manufacturing firm A. Brown Co. Inc.

A. Brown Energy is the newest company to join the local oil industry.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, A. Brown corporate secretary Oliva Pedere said the company signed a joint-venture deal with Tracer Petroleum to market and trade crude oil and petroleum products not just in the Philippines but in other countries in the Far East and Australia.

In a separate disclosure in Canada, Tracer Petroleum president and chief executive David Robinson said A. Brown Energy would own 51 percent of the joint venture, which would compete with oil giants Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc. and Petron Corp. as well as 60 other new players in the downstream oil sector.

So far, the 60 new players in the sector have aggregately pumped in more than P10 billion in investments since the industry was deregulated in March 1998.

A. Brown is a manufacturing and trading company with business interests in the Philippines and Indonesia. Established in 1993, it was the result of the merger of EPIC Holdings, Brown Chemical Corp. and Brown Chemical Sales Corp.

Tracer Petroleum is a junior oil and gas exploration and production company with corporate headquarters in Calgary, Alberta.

Tracer Petroleum has been active in petroleum exploration and development in Indonesia. However, the company has refocused its efforts to areas outside of Indonesia and has sold its Indonesian holdings but will continue to hold a carried interest of 5 percent in the North Tanjung Block.

In line with its petroleum interests, Tracer Petroleum has been pursuing a number of significant development opportunities in the Islamic Republic of Iran through its unique relationship with the Mullins Group of London, England. A subsidiary, Tracer Petroleum International, was jointly formed with the Mullins Group in order to facilitate the identification of and negotiation for interests in major petroleum ventures in Iran.

# A Call To Affirm The Independence of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

The various business organizations represented below strongly stand by the principle that our Monetary Authorities be kept as an independent institution, free from political pressure, as embodied in the Republic Act 7653 which established the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. For the conduct and governance of monetary policy to be effective, it is critical that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) be given the opportunity to operate within an environment that is free of political recrimination. To suggest that a change in monetary leadership is a normal courtesy extended to every new political leadership is precisely to perpetuate a relationship between politics and monetary policy which has historically proven itself to be unproductive. It is for this very reason that the independence of the central monetary authority is explicitly stated in our Constitution and in R. A. 7653 as a safeguard in any attempt to revert to the ways of the past. With this principle firmly enshrined, we have witnessed in the past 15 years the free exercise of political dynamism without having to disrupt the continuity of our monetary institutions or its leadership.

We commend the administration of President Arroyo for explicitly recognizing the independence of the BSP and its leadership. We are confident that the international community shares this view and that this independence will be seen as a vote for the strong inclination of the new government to respect constitutional mandates. This can only augur well for the Philippines who must now prove to the rest of the world that the events of the past few months translate into a more conducive economy without sacrifice of the rule of law.

We ask those who profess the opposing view to carefuly consider the lessons of history. This notwithstanding, nothing precludes any party from pursuing available legal avenues that allow for the proper ventilation of any issue raised. As a country, we are only too aware of how powerful this respect for constitutional processes can be. All that we suggest is for the same respect for processes be applied in all other facets of governance.

*Makati Business Club*

*Bankers Association of the Philippines*

*Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

*Management Association of the Philippines*

*Investment House Association of the Philippines*

*Employers Confederation of the Philippines*

*Federation of Philippine Industries*

*Chamber of Thrift Banks*

*Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc.*

*Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines*

*Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines*

*Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines*

*Offshore Bankers Association*

# Gov't to review NFA operations

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority will undertake a thorough review of the operations of state trading agencies, particularly the National Food Authority which businessmen claimed had distorted the market for rice and sugar.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said the move was part of the Macapagal administration's strategy of rationalizing the regulatory role of government in economic affairs.

State trading agencies like the NFA are tasked to fill up the shortfall in the local production of basic commodities with imports to prevent shortage of supply in the local market.

The main focus of the review is the NFA which, Canlas said, had taken an expanded role in the regulation of commodities after previous administrations abolished a number of corruption-ridden state trade agencies.

Canlas said the NFA was meant to manage the country's importation of rice but it has expanded its portfolio to include even sugar imports.

The NFA took an even larger role in the state's importation of key commodities after its control was transferred from the Department of Agriculture to the Office of the President. This system has led to clashes between the DA and the NFA over issues involving the timing of the importation and the volume of imports. Late last year, Malacañang issued an executive order transferring control of the NFA back to the DA as part of former Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara's plan to privatize the agency. The Macapagal administration has yet to decide whether to pursue this thrust.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the government' trading system was inherently flawed because it has been abused by unscrupulous traders who profit from the advanced information of the state's import orders.

Roxas said that the government has been lambasted for buying overpriced sugar or rice in the world market. This, he said, was largely caused by traders who make forward orders on these commodities at a much lower price than what the government would pay under government to government contracts normally concluded months before actual transactions.

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# Canlas expects GNP to grow 5-6% by 2004

**By Doris C. Dumlao and Raul C. Dancel**

THE GOVERNMENT'S chief economist said Friday the economy should grow by 5 percent to 6 percent before the 2004 presidential elections.

In an interview, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas told the INQUIRER he expected the gross domestic product to grow by 5 percent to 6 percent in the next three years.

GDP refers to the total market value of the final goods and services produced within a country's boundaries. It excludes income from investments abroad.

In another forecast, Deutsche Bank AG said it had revised upward its growth forecast for the Philippines this year, with a warning that the government's budget deficit, if left unchecked, could derail the new administration's efforts to rebuild the economy.

Deutsche Bank, one of Europe's biggest banks, said in a report that Philippine GDP could grow by 2.5 percent this year. The bank's original forecast had been 1.8 percent.

The administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo is aiming for a growth target of 3.8 to 4.3 percent this year.

Deutsche Bank believes this target is too high "because we expect that the slowdown in external demand—particularly electronics—will dominate changes in domestic demand." It added that the "lagged impact" of the crisis-driven 400-basis-point increase in interest rates late last year and the peso's depreciation against the dollar would dampen growth in domestic demand.

The government, the bank said, was also not in a position to stimulate growth by increasing spending because of its huge budget deficit.

The government estimates that the deficit may expand to P145 billion this year from P139 billion—or 4.1 percent of GDP—last year and may even hit P209 billion unless tax collection improves.

"Durable improvement requires delivering on fiscal tightening. Our discussions in Manila leave us cautiously optimistic that improvements will be forthcoming," Deutsche Bank stressed.

The bank said it was "cautiously optimistic" considering the new administration had a "firm understanding of the causes of the country's economic problems and intends to quickly and forcefully address them."

"It is particularly significant to us that fiscal consolidation appears to be at the top of the agenda and that there is a genuine belief at the most senior levels of government that containing the deficit by implementing an 'austerity budget' is the most effective way of stabilizing the markets and stimulating a return to sustainable economic growth," it said.

The Department of Budget and Management is seeking a revision of the P725-billion budget submitted by the Estrada administration because the government does not have the money to fund it.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the new administration would bring "fiscal discipline" back to the government to avoid the possibility of the budget deficit again growing to over P100 billion.

Boncodin said some government projects, including a pay hike this year for civil servants, would have to be deferred.

Canlas, the economic planning secretary, said a GDP growth rate of 5 to 6 percent would entail a lower inflation rate.

"That (growth target) can't be achieved without lower inflation. I'd like to see inflation slowing down to a single-digit level not exceeding 5 percent in the next three years," he said.

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SUZUKI

# Globalization: Rushing through four channels

*(First of three parts)*

By Dennis M. Arroyo

GLOBALIZATION can be defined as the increasing flow of products, people, money, and ideas across the globe. National economies are being swept into the global economy.

One can thus think of globalization as rushing through four channels:

- Freer trade of goods;
- Freer mobility of labor;
- Freer investment; and
- Freer communication, thanks to telecommunications and the Internet.

### What causes globalization?

**Capitalism.** Free enterprise is now the dominant economic system in the world. China is very much capitalist and her late Communist Party leader Deng Xiaoping coined the slogan, "To get rich is glorious." Only Cuba and North Korea are holding on to the central planning system of running the economy.

Capitalism brings along free trade and the free flow of money across the earth. Countries belonging to the World Trade Organization are trying to bring down tariff barriers. Today, immense portfolio investments zip in and out of countries at the click of a mouse.

With free trade comes economic integration. It is possible to download an album of songs in Manila, turn it into CDs in Beijing, print the cover and lyric sheet in Hong Kong, and sell it in Los Angeles.

The greatest story of economic integration is the European Union, with its common currency, the euro.

**Information economy.** Another driving force is the knowledge economy. Land, labor and capital are bowing in importance to brain creativity. In the United Kingdom, over a three-year span, manual jobs dropped by 750,000, while professional jobs shot up by 1.5 million.

**Mass media.** The invention of the printing press helped scattered people become a national community. In the same way, the evening news is nurturing world community. The suffering in India and Indonesia are brought home through CNN.

**Telecoms.** There is a global boom in telecommunications. A fourth of all Europeans have mobile phones. The people of Finland have the greatest access to cell phones at 417 for every 1,000 people.

**Worldwide Web.** The telecommunications surge in turn fuels the explosive growth of the Internet. It took radio 38 years to reach 50 million users. It took the Internet only four years. Iceland already has 45 percent of its population online.

### Benefits of globalization

As management guru Peter Drucker has said, "The one unambiguous lesson of the last 40 years is that increased participation in the world economy has become the key to domestic economic growth and prosperity."

Greater production. The global expansion of trade and enterprise has brought bast benefits.

Think of a firm manufacturing T-shirts for a market of two milion people, say, a small city. Then the company decides to export to China. It then faces a potential market of one billion Chinese.

GLOBALIZATION/ C2

## Europe fertile ground for smart card expansion

LONDON—At Nottingham University, students buying books, newspapers or lunch, checking out books, entering buildings or even voting in campus elections use smart cards.

"I don't come to campus with money anymore. The card is much more convenient," says Giles Gale, 21, a third-year student of economics at Nottingham. "I use it all the time I'm on campus."

Smart cards, albeit with limited uses, have been popular for years in parts of Asia and Latin America. Despite pilot projects, smart cards have never been a commercial hit in the United States, where the magnetic-only variety is king.

In Europe, however, the plastic cards with embedded memory chips have made serious inroads.

### 70 million

They are used by 70 million Germans for health insurance identification purposes. In different configurations, they are also widely deployed—particularly in Britain and France—to decipher encrypted television signals.

"Smart cards are one of the fastest growing industries," said Chris Mylonas, commercial director for NDS, which has shipped 80 million cards for use in set top boxes to decode signals for subscription channels.

"To upgrade the service, you can recall the cards rather than the box," Mylonas said.

The killer application in Europe may well be the electronic purse, which allows users to make small cash purchases with debit cards. For larger purchases, smart cards make it easier for banks to verify identification.

### Egg

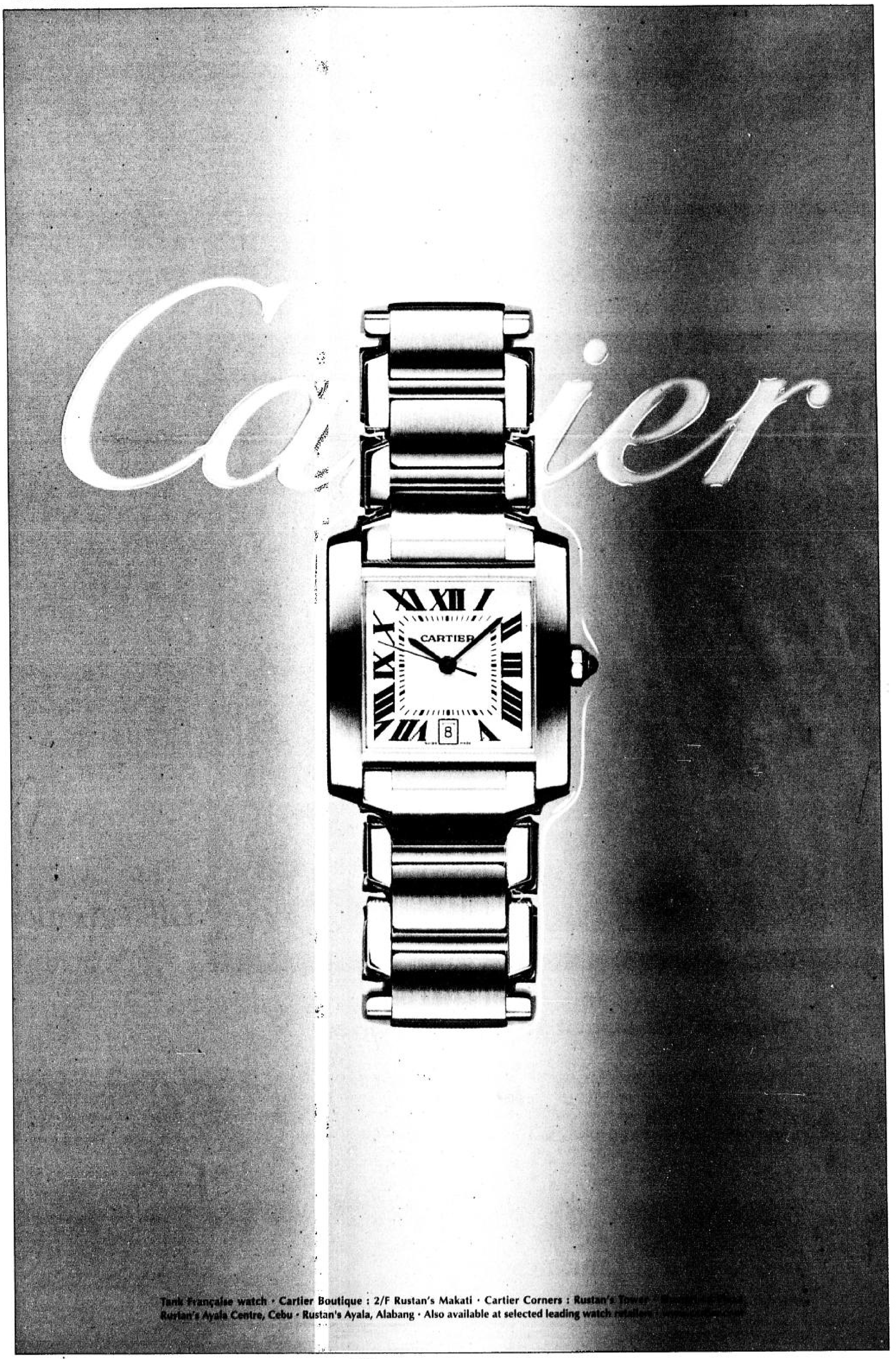
For the online British bank Egg, "the vision was that the smart card would give customers increased financial control," said spokesman Andy Thompson.

Egg, launched by Prudential PLC in 1999, has issued 100,000 Visa smart cards with upgradeable onboard chips that are currently used as debit cards. Said Thompson: "the prime benefit of this card is to protect the bank from fraud," allowing it to pass savings along to the client.

"For everyone, the attractions are security, ease of use and convenience," said Dominique Hautain, executive vice president of Proton International, a Belgian company in the Visa camp.

Proton and its allies have issued some 60 million smart cards in 24 countries around the world. And they are planning large-scale testing this year of a follow-on technology, using a new global standard—the Common Electronic Purse Specification.

EUROPE/ C8



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# Good governance for nation building

MAPPING THE FUTURE

*Ricardo S. Pascua*

I AM grateful for the opportunity and I humbly accept the challenge of leading the Management Association of the Philippines this year.

A week ago, we installed a new government and a new President of the Republic. The anxiety and restiveness of the nation brought about by the political crisis have now subsided. With its end, hope has flowed back as we look forward to improving days ahead.

The mood of joy and triumph, however, should not make us forget that we have just been graced with a new beginning. As managers whose main focus is results, it is essential that our efforts from hereon help in truly creating a better future, not only for the businesses we lead, but also for our beloved Philippines.

The recent crisis in political leadership and its impact on the economy should teach us to participate more actively in the debate on national issues, in the process of selecting government leaders and in keeping tabs over their behavior in office.

As a consequence of this crisis, many businesses had temporarily put their operations into a state of suspended animation, crippling productivity. Business managers began to adjust targets, reduce manpower, and realign strategic thrusts in view of the uncertainty.

This cloud of uncertainty, however, made us fully realize the true worth of political stability. Political stability is crucial in enabling us to work well. It is the necessary foundation on which the businesses and institutions we lead must rest. And if there is any lesson we should learn from People Power II, it is that business should make a stand. It should make its voice heard all the time to prevent another serious crisis situation to recur.

Your board selected "Good Governance for Nation Building" as the association's theme for this year. We chose this while the impeachment trial was still in progress. We could not have guessed how and when the trial would end, but it is a theme that indeed addresses the core of the crisis.

Despite the end of the crisis, our theme continues to be relevant. It even supports the four point agenda of our new President. These are: (a) to win the fight against poverty, (b) to improve moral standards in government and society, (c) to change from personality-driven to program-based politics, and (d) to promote leadership by example. The second and the fourth areas directly link our theme to the President's concerns.

Everyone shares the view that good governance is founded on the core values of competence, honesty and integrity, honor and morality, transparency, dedication to service, commitment to excellence, and love of God and fellowmen. No one will contest that these timeless virtues are essential in leadership. And leaders must exhibit these virtues in the way they conduct their personal and professional lives for good governance to ensue.

The practice of good governance, however, is not limited to government. It extends to corporate governance. Good corporate governance is essential for us to have the moral basis for advocating the same in government. We should avoid being accused of "seeing the splinter in other men's eyes, but unable to see the log lodged in our own." Good corporate governance will be our basis for maintaining and perhaps, regaining the confidence not only of our direct stakeholders, but also of the public.

The Management Association of the Philippines under the past leaderships, and most recently, under the leadership of our immediate past president, Johnny Santos, has worked on a number of programs and submitted excellent results and laudable achievements for the association.

These include: high visibility in both the business community and Philippine society, broadening of the membership base and enhancement of service to members, creation of programs to support government initiatives in building the economy, and reinforcing MAP's legacy of excellence in management and commitment to national development. Clearly, MAP's vision has been advanced well in the previous year.

For this year, I propose that MAP continue to build on the accomplishments of the past. We will reinforce further our advocacy program on national issues and the advancement of the concept of good governance. We will raise the "decibel level" of our individual and collective voices in articulating on issues that affect our businesses and our lives. To tone down can be construed as shirking from our responsibility of good corporate leadership.

In addition to the existing committees, we have created a new Committee on Effective Governance. This committee shall be headed by our Management Man of the Year in 1999, former Department of Energy Secretary, Delfin L. Lazaro, who submitted a paper to this association on national issues and good governance that MAP can address.

Of specific interest is his recommendation for MAP to organize a management consultancy program offered to government institutions, similar to Flag, Mabini and others that can improve the systems and practices in the government bureaucracy.

The same committee must conceptualize an activity that will support government in establishing and raising governance standards equal to the best in the world to make it truly responsive to the needs of society. Del Lazaro argues in his paper that good political leaders are in general not good managers in the business sense because he says, "the key success factors of a politician are not compatible with the practices of good management."

Loyalty to a politician and helping him get elected remain as prime considerations for a government position. The crony environment in government is a result of this traditional political practice. Our ability to interface with government even in the selection of government leaders can be a means of eliminating these observed weaknesses in governance.

I urge all our members to offer and discuss openly novel and radical views that will bring about effective and efficient methods and policy reforms in the delivery of government services.

That we are listed among the top countries in the areas of economic risk, grave garbage problems, graft and corruption, money laundering, poverty and destitution, among others, and yet regarded, as among the highest in literacy and well-educated population as well as the only Catholic country within the region strikes me as highly ironic.

We have indeed a vast field of subjects to study and to debate on in relation to governance.

I have initiated this advocacy program by offering a radical change in the delivery of the government's constitutional mandate of providing basic education through a government funded educational voucher system. (The merits of the voucher system were published in the Jan. 1,20001 issue of this column). I will propose this to the government leadership as a measure of addressing the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the public schools system, particularly, to respond to the needs of Filipino parents in preparing their children for globalization and making them competitive in a global economy.

In terms, which can be measured, I would like that MAP this year to be rated on the following basis:

First, MAP's heightened advocacy programs on national issues and its ability to make its views reach a broader base by supplementing its MAPping the Future column with a variety of other communications devices.

Second, the development of a pool of professional managers among members ready to provide free consultations to government institutions which need help in streamlining organizations and systems in line with the concept of Flag, Mabini and the like or in formulating and suggesting policy reforms.

Third, the establishment of clear and meaningful standards that can be used as a basis for measuring the performance of governance, which can help in identifying weaknesses for easier formulation of corrective measures,

And fourth, the awakening of government's consciousness in the value of providing Filipino children a better basic education through the voucher system to improve their ability to compete in our globalized -environment.

I had thought that the pessimism and doubt we all had at the beginning of this year would continue to dampen our spirits. But clearly, God has planned something else for us. The second edition of People Power triumphed against formidable initial odds, giving all of us another chance, another breath of hope.

I am hopeful that our efforts, hard work and programs this year will again yield commendable results. I enjoin every member to lend his or her full support in realizing our vision of making the Management Association of the Philippines truly "more relevant and more nationally involved." This time through its increased role in the discussion of national issues and involvement in ensuring that leaders of government and business embrace and exercise good governance and in helping generate ideas for the improvement of government, of our community and our country.

*(The author is president of Management Association of the Philippines and President and CEO of Metro Pacific Corporation and Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation. This article contains the acceptance speech delivered by the author at the induction of the 2001 Board of Governors of the Management Association of the Philippines during the MAP Inaugural Meeting on 29 January 2001. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached at mapsec@globe.com)*

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# Globalization . . .

(From page C1)

Expanding the market not only bloats profits. It also allows the firm to produce in much greater volumes. That drives down the cost for each T-shirt. In the end, even the original local city benefits from the lower prices.

**More competition.** Competition serves the consumer. Remember when PLDT monopolized the telecommunications market in the country? With liberalization and foreign investment, Filipinos feasted on a whole array of telecom companies, cell phones and beepers.

Following the insights of economist Joseph Schumpeter, the global market promotes creative destruction: the fit cross-fertilize as the lousy are weeded out.

**Wider work choices.** A Filipino college graduate can find himself employed in Hanoi, London, and Vancouver.

**Access to world culture.** Products and ideas from abroad provide Filipinos a richer cultural menu. We taste Japanese sushi, Korean *bulgogi* and Thai *nam prik*. We turn on the TV to Mexican soap operas. We get to practice the spin moves of Kobe Bryant.

Globalization even inspires solidarity. Because nations are more interconnected through globalized media, we get to feel each other's pain. A CNN broadcast draws sympathy for India's earthquake victims.

### Dangers of globalization?

**Economic vulnerability.** Local companies feel threatened by cheaper imports and behemoth foreign firms. Some will exit the playing field.

There lurks the fear of displacement. Mega-forces twist nations into adjusting their economies. As such, hordes of workers have to change jobs, factories, cities and countries.

**Volatility.** The market has become most volatile. Capital flows in and out of nations at lightning speed. As Russia well knows, a country can bleed millions of dollars with the click of a mouse.

**Disempowerment.** Amid the fury of market change, individuals may find themselves powerless. A professor wakes up to see her salary cut sharply by devaluations across Asia.

This disempowerment extends to national sovereignty. Where is independence when technocrats dictate your economy's behavior from across the ocean?

**Undesirable culture.** Local culture gets polluted. Grade school kids surf the Internet for pornographic websites. Aping American culture has produced such anomalies as Pinoy Westerns. MTV can spawn a generation of youth that won't dream of serving. *Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com.*

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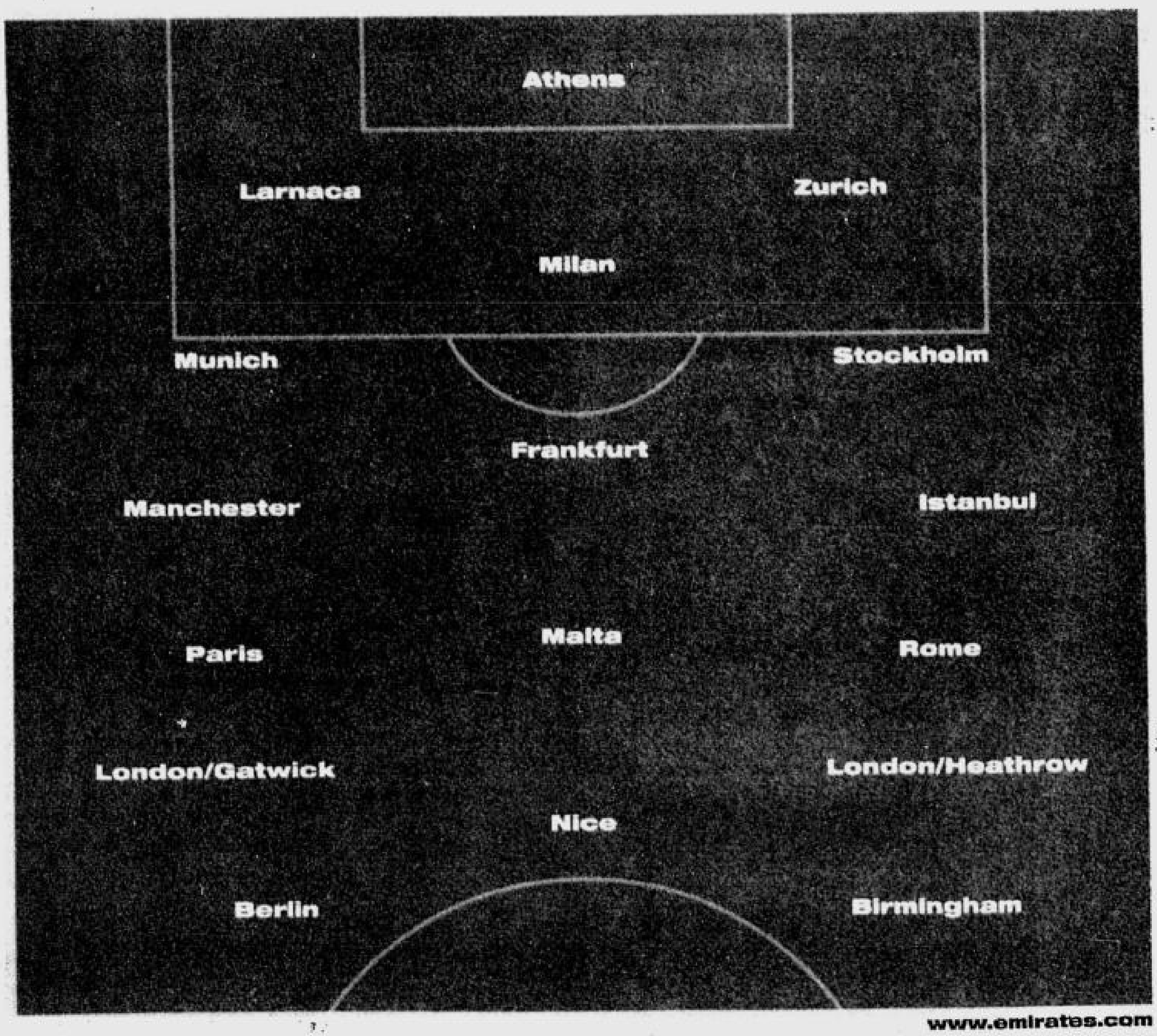

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# Hong Kong banks circle SMEs for high-yield loans

A LOW level of transparency and a sluggish loan growth environment are preventing lending to small and medium enterprises from taking off any time soon but this does not mean that the sector should be neglected.

Forming 98 percent of all companies in Hong Kong and employing about 60 percent of the workforce, the SME sector is actually the backbone of the Hong Kong economy. Ironically, it is a sector that has been largely ignored by Hong Kong banks.

Two surveys conducted by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) into the financing of SMEs showed that they still found bank lending inadequate, with about two thirds of the respondents indicating that personal savings were their only source of funding.

These days, however, Hong Kong bankers reckon that the SME sector will present big opportunities as the Hong Kong economy picks up. Hong Kong banks, faced with increasing competitive pressure and narrowing margins in the consumer banking market, are looking to diversify into high-yield products such as SME loans.

Banks like HSBC, Hang Seng, Bank of China and Citibank have declared that they are turning their attention back to the SMEs.

HSBC has recently set up dedicated business units to cater specifically to the needs of SMEs. Brian Robertson, head of corporate and institutional banking at HSBC in Hong Kong said that 40 percent of new customers taken on this year by the bank were SMEs.

It is fair to say that a gap between the demand for bank credit by SMEs and the supply of funds by the banks exists. The HKMA surveys showed that SMEs had credit lines reduced by 10 to 20 percent between October 1997 and September 1998, and continued to suffer reductions of 20 to 80 percent between October 1998 and October 1999.

But believing that SME lending would take off dramatically in the immediate future based on these figures is naive.

Banks are typically in the business of managing risk. SME lending in Hong Kong is still a high-risk business due to a general lack of disclosure by the SMEs.

"In Hong Kong, you can't really gauge the SME's financial health just by looking at its financial statements. You have to put your ears to the ground. You have to understand the industry. You have to understand the man behind the business," said Fanny Ng, general manager for enterprise banking at DBS Kwong On Bank.

"If you look at the financial statements alone, there are not many SMEs that you can grant financing to," quipped Ng in jest.

To add to this, owners tend to mix personal with business activities. It is not uncommon to find entrepreneurs using borrowed funds to speculate in properties or for some other non-commercial personal purposes. This is one of the reasons behind the high delinquency rates in SME lending for the past few years.

As a result of the low level of transparency, credit assessment in SME lending remains more of an art than a science.

HSBC, for one, is trying to change this. It is developing a credit-scoring model for SME lending. Essentially, a large database of successful and unsuccessful companies is being built over time to ascertain the critical success factors.

Scorecards are then developed, which can be applied to loan applications and automate—to a certain extent—the credit analysis and approval process. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether the model will work in Hong Kong as success is highly reliant on the availability of good quality financial information from the SMEs, conceded Robertson.

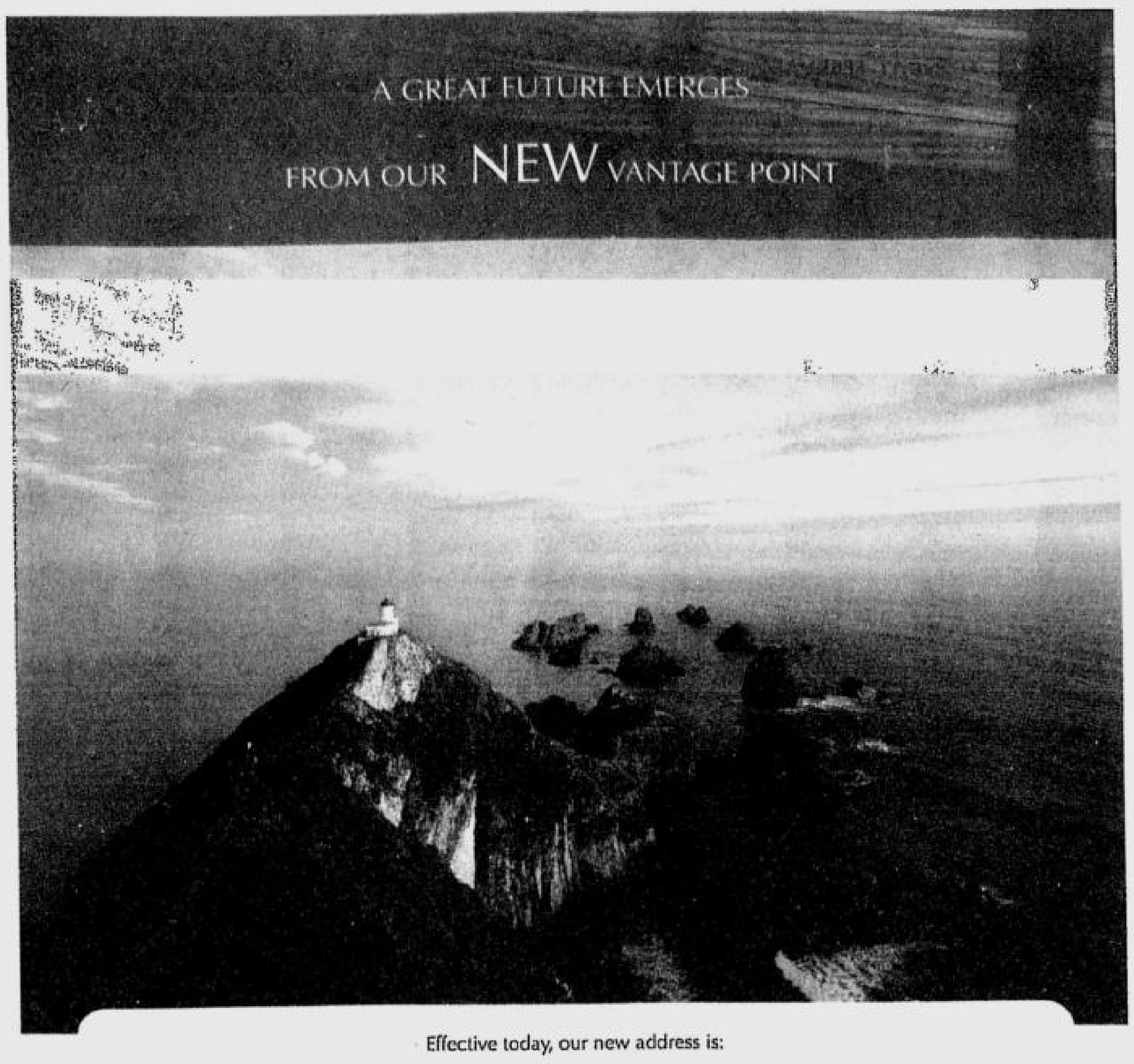
Bankers generally feel that the demand for loans from the SMEs may be overestimated. The view of SMEs not getting financing is too simplistic, they say.

More accurately, it is the start-ups that are having difficulties in getting bank financing as they have high failure rates and no track record. Given that most SMEs stopped expanding during the crisis years and are currently still recovering, a gradual rise in demand for loans from the SMEs is a more likely scenario.

"Frankly speaking, loan demand from the SMEs is not growing very much. It is difficult to have a loan growth environment when Hong Kong is still experiencing deflation," observed Raymond Lee, managing director and chief executive of Hong Kong Chinese Bank.

If one takes a step back and looks at the SME banking business in Hong Kong, one would see that most banks are still primarily focused on providing financing. Except, in the Internet age, SMEs have other

HONG KONG/ C7



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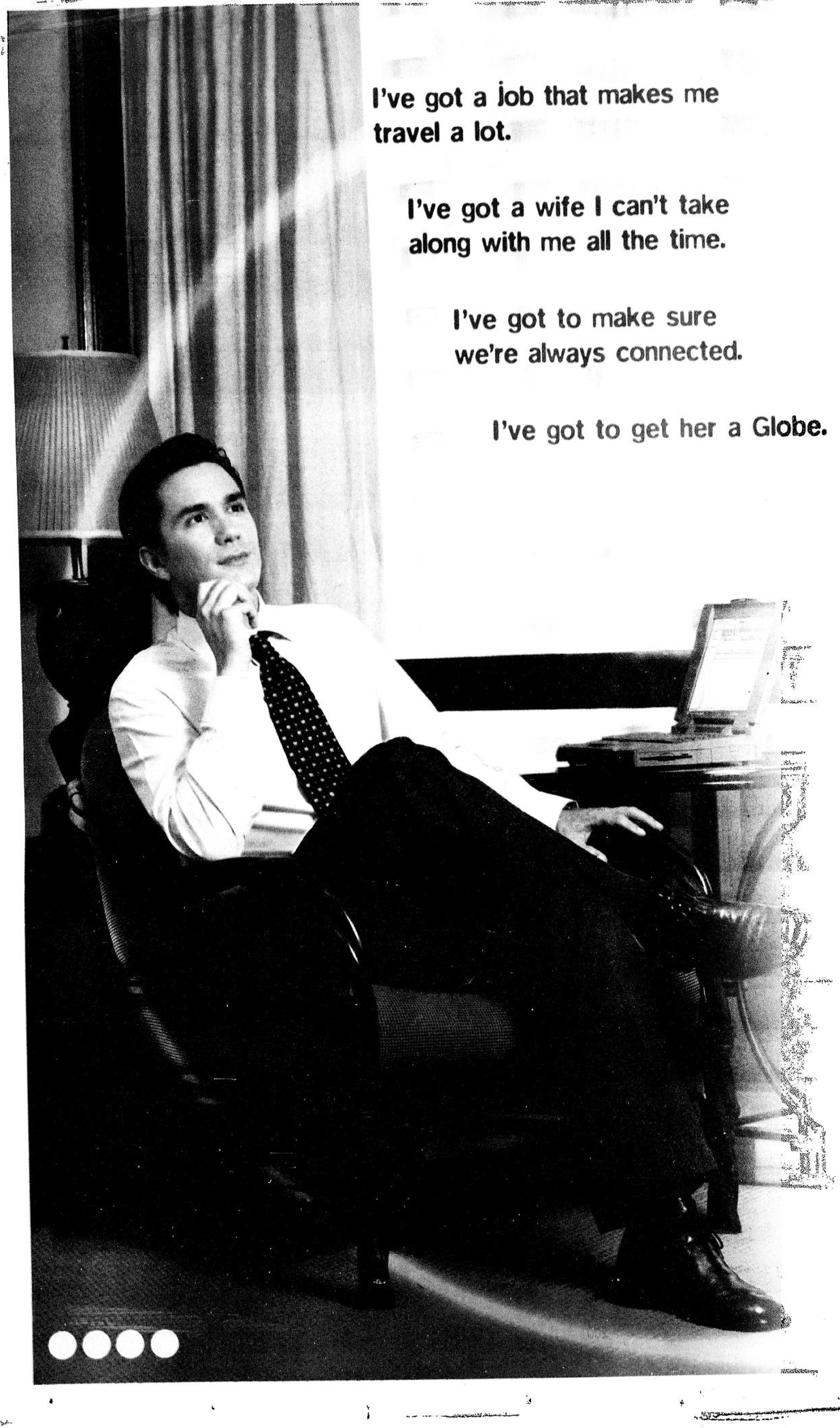
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# Tackling the road of remote payments

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

SOMEWHERE along the road to e-commerce where terms like business-to-commerce (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) came about, somebody forgot to figure out how people are supposed to do remote payments for millions, maybe even billions, of dollars worth of paperless transactions.

Most of the time, the way to pay is to use the traditional way—open letters of credit, and go through the banking system.

This is where MasterCard International hopes to make it really big.

The credit card firm has evolved and wants to make itself the leader in the financial aspects of e-commerce.

The credit card firm recently brought a group of journalists in Singapore to give a briefing on its moves toward this goal.

Jeff Portelli, in his overview of the e-commerce industry, points out: "The key is to reach out to customers anytime, anywhere in the world. It has been a shift from mass production to mass personalization."

He observes that the death of the dotcom companies in the US does not mean the death of the New Economy. "It is the coming together of the old and the new."

In particular, he says, that whereas 99 percent of payments in the past were done face to face, it is now being done by remote.

He says virtual companies have resulted in new business models and "everybody has raised the bar on what it takes to be a leader."

"Convergence means the number of different devices coming together gives consumers seamless access to electronics," he says.

He admits that the payments industry is a tough game but he says the firm's objective is to make all its members' accounts "Internet enabled."

In Southeast Asia and South Asia regions, it is aggressively pursuing innovations in the areas of remote payments, Internet commerce and chip commerce.

T.V. Sheshadri, vice president for Technology and Operations for the region, says under remote payments, there are noticeable differences in the products or innovations that sell in Southeast Asia.

Sheshadri was one of the speakers during a recent media briefing for the card company in Singapore, where this writer was invited.

He says in Malaysia and Singapore, the focus is on services, small ticket items, recurring transactions and multi-currency purchases, and integration with online banking.

In the Philippines, Indonesia, India and Thailand, what works are multiple payment options, domestic purchases, and tailored solutions.

Recently, MasterCard launched its Virtual MasterCard Account Program. This is a form of credit card that has no physical presence. The Virtual Account enables holders to shop online without the need to shuffle through their "physical" plastic cards. It also provides a sense of safety and security to the cardholder because it helps isolate the virtual transaction from their "real world" purchases.

The program is specifically designed to help members meet the evolving needs of consumers. It provides a payment vehicle that isolates online transactions from the peace of mind that comes from knowing that if their Virtual Account is ever compromised, it won't affect their other credit accounts.

Used with an e-Wallet, Web shoppers can enter their credit card information (name, account number and expiry date) once and store it securely in an icon —or "wallet"—for all future online shopping.

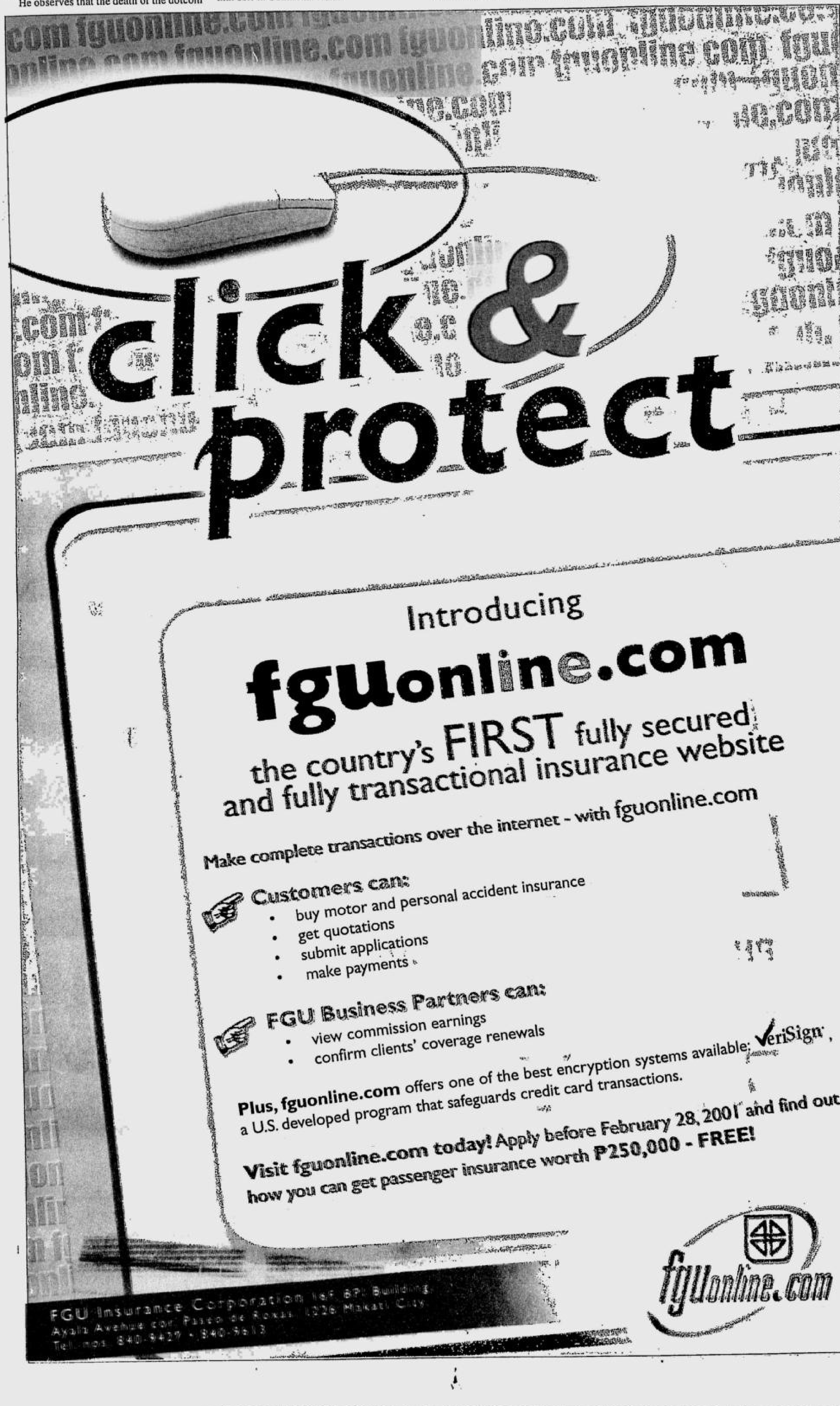
Mark Patrick , VP for acceptance development, says the new program is expected to be launched in the Philippines this year.

One area where MasterCard is giving attention to is the small and medium sized businesses.

Its strategy is to leverage the Internet, provide an array of value added products and services supporting small business needs at every stage of their life cycle, leverage strategic alliances for service delivery and content.

MasterCard has a small business portal where the business can buy and sell goods and services on line.

It's line is, "Can I grow my business using smart cards?"



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## MOVEMENTS

### IBM has new manager

SONIA Maxima Quiason-Ang, a graduate of the Moore School of Engineering and Computer Science of the University of Pennsylvania, was recently promoted to the post of top executive technical manager of the United States IBM Corp.

IBM official Lauren C. States said Quiason-Ang was "a visionary leader and entrepreneur with an innovative spirit and a passion for excellence." She has rendered 18 years of service as database and information system consultant of IBM in the United States, Southeast Asia, Latin America and Western Europe.

She was cited as the "Outstanding IBMer of the Year 1999" and elected to Whos Who among business executives of America in 2001.

Other posts she has held are those of senior consultant and specialist software IT, product specialist in DB 2 at the Northeast Zone of the United States at US IBM and IBM data management technical specialist of the year 2000.

The daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Serafin D. Quiason, Sonia is a graduate of St. Scholastica's Academy, Durham High School in North Carolina and the UP College of Business Administration (cum laude).

### New PLIA president elected

INSULAR Life EVP and chief operating officer, Ramon J. Abejuela, was voted president of the Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA) for 2001, in elections held on Jan. 3, 2001.

PLIA, which has over 40 member companies, is the umbrella organization of all life insurance companies in the Philippines.

Abejuela first worked at Insular Life in 1994 as consultant for finance and investments. He joined the company in 1996 as executive vice president and chief financial officer. In 1998, he was promoted to his present position of EVP and COO.

Abejuela graduated cum laude from De La Salle University with a degree in Chemical Engineering and finished his Masters in Business Management from the Asian Institute of Management.

Abejuela said that "being voted president of PLIA is a vote of confidence and a recognition of the position of Insular Life in the insurance industry." Also elected as PLIA directors are: Felipe Diego, vice president; Alfredo Tumacder, secretary; Marriane Crisol, treasurer; and members Armando Trinidad, Rodolfo Desiderio, Peter Coyiuto, Benjamin Lim and Joseph Velhagen.

PLIA became the official association of the industry in 1989 with Insular Life chair and president Vicente R. Ayllon as its first president.

PLIA's purpose is to promote the growth of the life insurance industry so that it can contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation. PLIA launched its campaign "Life Insurance for Everyone (LIFE) last year."

It is a project which supports the Insurance Commission's Vision 20/20 that aims to have 20 percent of the Filipino population covered by life insurance by the end of 2000.

PLIA was also responsible for the Life Insurance Consciousness Week (LICW) held every first week of October.

### Philamlife's promotions

JOSE L. Cuisia Jr., president and chief executive officer of The Philippine American Life & General Insurance Co., announced the following executive promotions effective Jan. 1, 2001.

Promoted to the rank of executive vice president and chief investments officer is Edgardo A Grau. He is a graduate of De La Salle University where he earned his degree in Mechanical Engineering. Grau also holds an MBA from the Wharton Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania. As EVP and CIO, Grau will continue to assume responsibility over the company's investments operations as well as over the investments functions and activities of the other companies in the Philam Group.

Promoted to the rank of vice president and associate director of agencies for Mindanao is Anagel L Ledesma. Ledesma is a magna cum laude graduate of BS Psychology of the Centro Escolar University. With her promotion, she will continue to oversee the agency operations of the entire Mindanao region.

Also promoted to rank of vice president and associate director of agencies for Visayas is Ma. Cecilia G. Lizares. Lizares is LiaCom graduate, major in Economics, of St. Scholastica's College and is a Fellow of the Life Management Institute. She will continue to be responsible for the agency operations for the whole of the Visayas Region.

Promoted to the rank of vice president for human resources is Teresita L. Sanchez. A Fellow of the Life Management Institute, Sanchez is an AB Psychology graduate, cum laude, from the University of the Philippines. She is presently vice president of the Society of Fellows in the Life Industry in the Philippines.

Sanchez will be responsible for the organization development group where she will introduce and administer HR interventions that would promote management of change within the Philam Group and will continue to provide executive supervision and support to the other areas of the corporate human resources division of Philamlife.

Promoted to the rank of vice president for corporate finance is John Eric S. Lustre. A graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University where he earned his BSC degree in Marketing and AB degree in Economics. Lustre also holds a Masters degree in Business Management and Financial Management from the Asian Institute of Management. He will continue to be responsible for the corporate finance department and assist the chief investments officer in developing various direct investments transactions.

### New Unocal SVP

EL SEGUNDO, .California—Unocal Corp. has named Chris Wright as senior vice president, Global Exploration and Technology.

In this position, Wright will help to oversee the company's exploration and technology strategy and portfolio and will serve as a key adviser to Unocal's management committee on exploration, technology and growth strategy issues.

Wright, 53, previously served as Lasmo Plc's group managing director and director of new business. Prior to joining Lasmo, Wright held business development positions at Mobil Oil and spent 20 years with British Petroleum where he held positions including chief executive for Frontier and International E&P, head of BP North America and worldwide chief geologist.

"This is an important year for our company's focused exploration strategy, and we are fortunate to have the benefit of Chris' global exploration and technology experience and judgment," said Chuck Williamson, Unocal's chief executive officer.

Unocal is one of the world's leading independent oil and gas production companies, with its largest operations in Asia. In addition, Unocal is also a leading producer of geothermal power, supplying its hosts countries, the Philippines and Indonesia, over 1,000 megawatts of clean, renewable power.

Its local subsidiary, Philippine Geothermal Inc. (PGI), partners with the state-owned National Power Corp. to run the Tiwi and Makiling-Banahaw (Male-Ban) geothermal fields.

# How livable is your home city?

By Dennis M. Arroyo

**TECHNO-JABBERS**

LET'S examine the standard of living in the city. There are many ways of measuring the quality of life in the urban centers. Check out the Dec. 15, 2000 issue of Asiaweek, which ranks 40 Asian cities for livability.

A main indicator is average income, for higher incomes mean more power to buy consumer goods. Perhaps equally vital is employment, for we want as many residents as possible to have jobs.

The people's level of education matters. Investment by the government on education reveals how highly the state prioritizes education. Measure then state education spending per capita.

What about the quality of education? For primary school, one clue is average class size. Swollen classes mean that the teacher can't give full attention to each of her pupils. Look also into the ratio of college-educated people as a percentage of the population.

We want housing to be affordable. One Asiaweek index is average house price. A second is the ratio of house price to annual income. Then a third is average monthly rental per square meter.

There are indicators of health. One is the number of hospital beds per 1,000 population. The greater this ratio, the more accessible is health care.

Families should be able to dispose of their waste if they are to stay healthy. Hence urban livability looks for the percent of the population with sewerage.

Related to health is air pollution. Commuters can see Metro Manila's pollution as a band of gray hovering over the morning horizon. The index for dust is micrograms of suspended particles per cubic meter of air. Car exhaust can be troublesome as well. So instruments measure sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide in the air.

Then there is that horrendous problem of traffic. Obviously, the less congested the roads, the better. So one indicator here is vehicles per kilometer of city road. Another guide is the area allotted to parks and fields, expressed here as square meters per capita. Then a current index of traffic congestion is the existence of a mass transit railway system. Does the city have some kind of metro rail line?

All these impact on the ease of travel. Hence, a critical traffic indicator is average time to commute to work.

We regard crime as crucial in quality of life. We want incidents of crime to be as close to zero as possible. The standard measure here is criminal cases per 10,000.

Leisure, likewise, forms part of the picture. Who would want to live in a boring city? Asiaweek's indicator is the number of movie theaters per 100,000 people.

Finally, we are living in the information age. We must get data on the instruments of communication. Indicators mentioned in the list include the number of television sets, telephones, cell phones, and Internet connections per 1,000 people.

So how does Metro Manila rate beside her Asian sisters? The Top 5 are Fukuoka, Tokyo and Osaka in Japan, as well as Singapore and Taipei. Metro Manila ranks 25th in the list. That's above Jakarta, Colombo, Delhi, Bombay, and Dhaka. *(Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com.)*

JOYCO ~~URC~~ executive president Lance Gokongwei shows off one of the first products manufactured at the Joyco URC Confectionery Plant. At a recently held inauguration in Calamba, Laguna, Gokongwei is optimistic that Joyco URC's will be one of the leading candy exporters in Southeast Asia. The Joyco URC processing plant is a result of a business partnership between Universal Robina Corp., one of the country's largest food manufacturers, and Joyco, the world's biggest candy producer based in Spain.

# Hong Kong . . .

(From page C3)

needs as well. One of the challenges facing SMEs is this whole transition into the "New" or Knowledge-based Economy. SMEs essentially want business partners who can help them face the challenge.

This represents opportunities for Hong Kong banks. They can work with the SMEs to help them transpose their brick-and-mortar businesses onto the Internet as well as provide the payment gateway.

Helping SMEs attain greater transactional efficiency and better cash flow management represents another opportunity for banks. A survey conducted by HSBC earlier this year on banking services revealed that SMEs in Hong Kong ranked transactional efficiency as the top priority.

Banks can offer online or automated banking services to these small businesses, enabling them to check account balances, make remittances and apply for Letters of Credit online. Other services that SMEs need and want are Web-based cash management, and online financing of account receivables and payables.

Although the SME market in Hong Kong has all the ingredients in place to become a tantalizing main dish in a Chinese banquet, it is likely, for the moment, to remain just a starter for margin hungry banks.

*Asian Banker Journal*

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# Europe . . .

**(From page C1)**

Competitor Mastercard has gone another technological route, in a consortium called Mondex International Ltd., which is the version used at Nottingham University.

Mondex, controlled by Mastercard, involves 26 banks around the world.

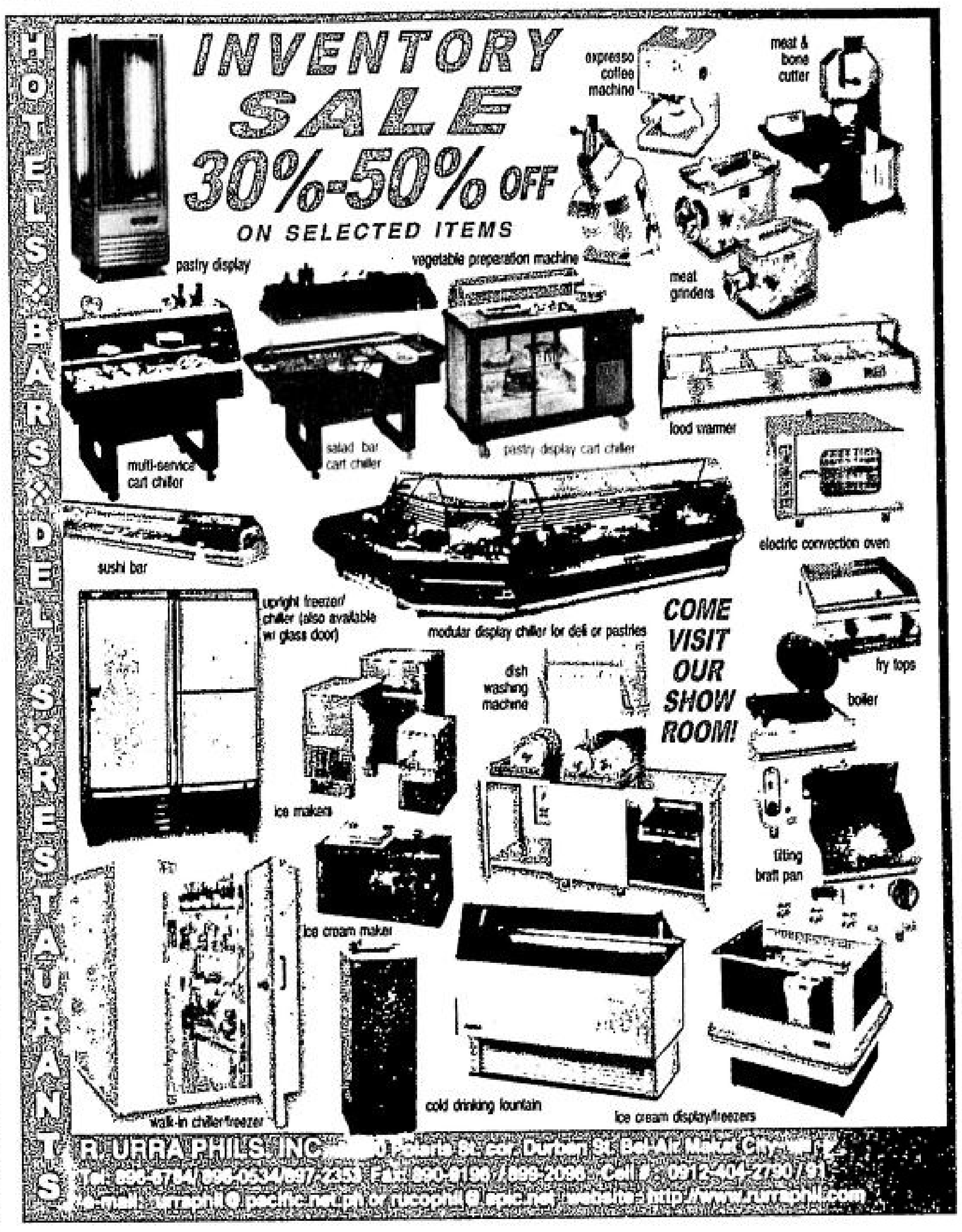
A third system, Geldcart, was issued to millions of German citizens but the cards are rarely used by the privacy-conscious Germans.

The main difference between the Visa and Mastercard systems is that Visa and CEPS allow banks to account centrally for every transaction.

With Mondex, the money is actually held on the card as digital data—stored value. It can be transferred from one person to another but not tracked.

"We do not believe that central accounting is economical," said Mike Young, director of e-market strategy for Mondex. But he acknowledged that, in the future, "a compromise, a middle ground, might be found."

The more widely smart cards are embraced, the more competitors can be expected to look to the mutual benefit offered by interoperability. *AP*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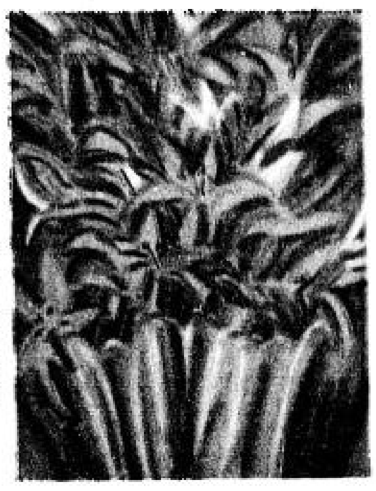
Story on page D5



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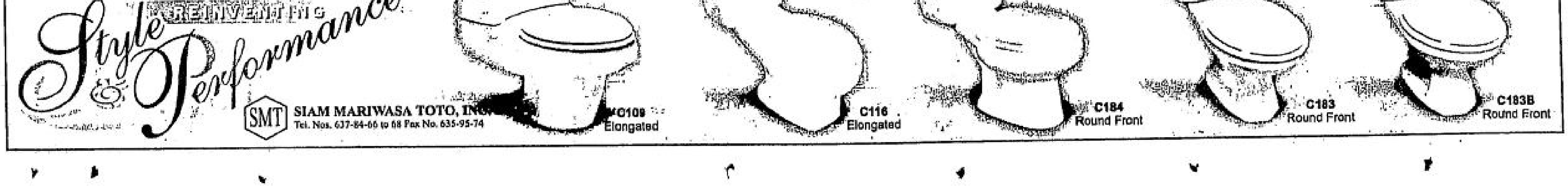

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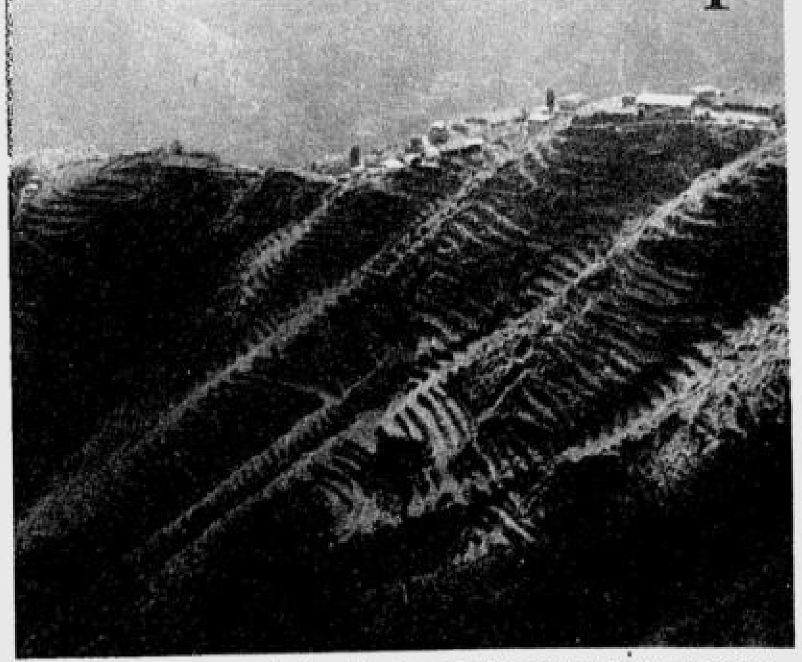
# Tradition under pressure in Philippine cultural landscapes



**CITED** by Unesco as a "cultural landscape," the Banaue Rice Terraces faces uncertainty.

THE 21ST century continues to pressure long-standing traditional practices that maintain the delicate balance between culture and nature in the premier living cultural landscapes in the Philippines. The balance between tradition and progress is the key issue the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras must answer in order to determine the path it must take for the future.

Cultural landscapes are the result of a long, repeated interaction between man and nature. In religious or relic landscapes, the interaction is historic and has long been completed; life has long left the site. However, in living cultural landscapes, the interaction between man and nature still exists. Therefore, the preservation of the living landscape is closely linked to the preservation of its resident culture whose present lifestyle is still intricately woven with the landscape. The traditional lifestyle is severely threatened these days. Consequently, rather than saying that to protect the landscape the local culture must be preserved or conserved, the issue is not human preservation by freezing human activity to a specific time in the past. The issue is to find a sustainable balance between the past and the future.

**SPACED OUT**

*Augusto F. Villalon*

It is significant that the cultural landscapes that still preserve their heritage are located in remote areas of the country that have traditionally experienced severe economic hardship. Poverty preserves landscapes and townscapes. Its effect in the eyes of the residents is that the traditional landscape and vernacular architecture symbolize the economic deprivation that they have suffered for many generations. As soon as a rise in income occurs, old houses are immediately replaced with new constructions of concrete and galvanized iron roofing, no matter if they become ovens in the summer or can drive residents deaf with the sound of monsoon rain falling heavily on the iron roofing. Never mind that the traditional house built of natural materials was completely suited to the environment and climate and that the new house is hostile to its natural surroundings. The new house is a shining symbol of progress, of having joined the 21st century.

## Participation

Residents of cultural landscapes and heritage zones must participate in the benefits of modernity. The difficult issue, therefore, is to manage the movement of the residents forward into the 21st century while conserving their culture, traditional knowledge and the landscape in a sustainable manner. It is a question of assisting the local culture in moving toward the future as quickly as possible while maintaining its links with the past, a demanding challenge that must be handled with extreme care.

For more than a thousand years, as some scholars maintain, the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras have followed the contours of the highest peaks of the Cordillera mountain range. The narrow rice fields are built up from stone and mud, sliced into mountaintops and ringed above by privately owned forests that play an important part in the water cycle. A traditionally designed hydraulic system with sluices and canals delivers unhampered water supply starting from the highest terrace descending to the lowest.

Traditional knowledge is passed orally from one generation to the next, forming the basis of the local culture's sacred beliefs and customs, establishing a delicate social balance and maintaining traditional skills in environmental management, factors that have combined to form a unique cultural expression within a landscape of great beauty that expresses conquered and conserved harmony between humankind and the environment.

The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1995 as "an outstanding example of living cultural landscapes. They illustrate traditional techniques and a remarkable harmony between humankind and the natural environment."

## Complex threats

The threats that face the Rice Terraces are complex. They begin with an apparent loss of manpower because of the immigration of the youth, who are sent by their parents to the lowlands for education and where they remain for employment opportunities not available in their traditional homes. The few who return to the highlands return by choice, preferring to continue the lifestyle and agricultural activities of their parents rather than live in the lowlands. An interesting theory exists that the carrying capacity of the site is so limited it cannot accommodate increasing population; therefore immigration relieves potential pressure on the site.

Working in the terraces is extremely difficult. It is impossible to bring farm animals or machinery to the terraces because of limited access, therefore planting, harvesting, maintaining the terrace walls and all other terrace activities must be done manually, without any mechanical aids. Nature is an unpredictable force that must be contended with. The irrigation system, a fine-tuned web of natural streams, catchments, ditches, sluices and bamboo pipes that deliver water evenly to each terrace, has suffered extensive earthquake damage that has misaligned the distribution system. The traditional system constructed of natural materials possessed pliability that allowed the network to adjust to minor earth movements due to rain or slight earthquakes. But it has been lost with the recent experiments in repairing the system with rigid concrete.

Clusters of villages with steep, pyramidal roofs of thatch—the most striking features of the landscape—have disappeared in recent years. A program assists owners of houses who have lost their thatched roofs to galvanized iron sheets to replace the sheets with thatch.

Technical programs in agriculture, forestry and hydraulics are being carried out on site. Joining traditional knowledge with technology, a Unesco-aided project for GIS mapping of the site started last month to generate the nonexistent baseline data needed for site management planning. The output of this project will fuse the traditional boundary system and computer-generated mapping of the terraces.

The Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force, the authority managing the site, recognizes that it is essential to continue the existing culture-based traditional practices to ensure the maintenance of the site. The work centers on cultural revival as the raison d'être for the simultaneous educational, environmental, agricultural and reconstruction programs being implemented by national and local authorities.

*E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph.*

**IFUGAO** holdover of the vanishing terraces

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**TREKKER** Raul Blay explores the terrain.

**CYCLISTS** prepare to descend on Batad town. In front are Red Mansueto, Raul Blay, Tony Barrios and Trygue Bolante. At the back are Arjuna Saulo and the author.

# Downhill slide for 'stairway to heaven'

By Ed L. Santoalla

The Banaue Rice Terraces is an endangered species

FOR MILLENNIA, it has sustained a people, providing them with food, a playground for their children and a defensive wall against invaders.

In more recent times, it has drawn tourists from all over, who stand in awe at this breath-taking marvel of engineering wrought by supposedly primitive hands, this monument to the resiliency of a people living in a hostile environment.

No less than the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Commission (Unesco) has declared the Ifugao Rice Terraces a world heritage site. It is a site that now stands threatened.

Over the past 50 years, the size of the cultivated terraces has shrunk by half from the original 15,000 hectares. The reasons for this are manifold, according to Trygve Bolante, vice president of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), an NGO that is helping Ifugaos in their struggle to arrest the destruction of the terraces.

Bolante recently invited this writer and a group of audiovisual producers to visit Ifugao and document the problems confronting the terraces and the communities which continue to rely on them, albeit less now than before, for their economic and cultural existence.

We also happen to be avid mountain bikers and trekkers and the trip provided an excellently opportunity to test our leg muscles while savoring the sights in this most rugged part of the Gran Cordilleras.

The first part of the trip had our group boarding mountain bikes for a two-hour ride up the steep and winding road from Banaue town to Bangaan, a sleepy village higher up in the mountains. Bangaan hosts rice terraces that make us realize there is more to this tourist attraction than what the hotel brochures say. Given the majestic and almost eternal quality of the terraces in the area, Bangaan is what Banaue must have been 25 or maybe 50 years ago, long before urban blight and crass commercialism had crept and taken over that poor tourist town.

Biking from Banaue to Bangaan gives us a new definition to off-road riding as we negotiate mountainsides that had fallen on roads and roads that had fallen off mountainsides. It is a glimpse of soil erosion, one of the main problems that if not arrested is sure to drive the terraces on the brink of extinction.

## Wonder of Batad

We stay the night at Bangaan, at a restaurant-inn that has authentic Ifugao huts for accommodations. This writer takes a step further: I pitch tent on the yard fronting the huts, the better to catch the next morning's sun's rays kissing the surrounding green amphitheater. Batad, like Bangaan, has rice terraces that has been declared a world heritage site by Unesco.

After breakfast, we take a short jeepney ride to a road junction that leads to Batad, another Ifugao village higher up in the Cordilleras. We alight and embark on a rigorous three-hour uphill trek whose impact was softened only by the incessant good-natured banter between outdoorsman Tony Barrios and American videographer Mark Gary, who was filming our suffering for posterity. Visual artist Red Mansueto, sound producer Raul Blay, PRRM man Bolante, mountaineering artist Dennis Lagdameo, Khumbmela outdoor sports business scion and daredevil downhiller Arjuna Saulo and myself listen to the banter and trudge on silently for the most part of the trek.

At Batad, we break bread with locals who, after allowing us only a few minutes of rest, talk us into spending the rest of the day trekking toward the "waterfall." This turns out to be Tappiyah, a 70-ft cascade that produces seemingly perpetual mist when it hits the crystalline river below. We wallow in the emerald pool, joking among ourselves that we had died and gone to trekker's heaven.

Tappiyah is situated at the bottom of the deep valley on which nestles the Batad Rice Terraces. It's like being in the navel of Mother Earth down there and the trek back up to where we were to stay the night was one memorably hellish experience. With fatigue blurring judgment on where to plant my foot on the narrow mountain trail in the swiftly gathering darkness, I slip twice and would have fallen off the steep cliffs were it not for thick cogon grass that caught me and the strong Ifugao hands that pulled me from the brink.

## Erosion

While on our Cordillera adventure, we got the chance to hobnob with members of the Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement (Sitmo) who talked to us about the problems facing their homeland. These include the deterioration of Ifugao's forest cover, which has led to soil erosion and the drying up of water sources. This, in turn, has adversely affected the productivity of the terraces, resulting in hunger and poverty that has forced many Ifugao farmers to abandon the terraces to seek opportunities elsewhere or in other endeavors.

"The sustainability of the Ifugao Rice Terraces is at stake," says Bolante, whose organization has initiated alternative livelihood programs for residents in the area. One of these programs is what PRRM calls ecological development tourism, a strategy that seeks to preserve the ecology of an area through responsible community-centered tourism.

In the case of Ifugao province, its rice terraces are its main tourism resource. It is a resource that is threatened and the only way to save it, Bolante explains, is to help the communities who live and depend on those terraces harness and eventually profit from the tourist interest in such resources.

"Sustaining local and international interest in the Ifugao Rice Terraces is really the first step toward preserving them," Bolante says. "With more tourists visiting Ifugao to marvel at the terraces, more of its people, especially the young, will be encourged to stay and work to maintain its incomparable beauty."

The ecodevtourism program is designed to teach Ifugaos how to be excellent tourism hosts. It also educates visitors on how to be responsible tourists, ever respectful of the culture of the host communities and ever mindful or the need to be careful in treading their way through the threntened paradise that are the Ifugao Rice Terraces.

If you are an outdoors person who wants to pursue your hobby while supporting a worthy cause, you may wish to get in touch with the Save the Rice Terraces Movement through the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, 3 Mother Ignacia corner Dr. Lazcana Sts., QC, tel. 413-4450, telefax 448-6311 or 372-4995, or e-mail ecodevfd@esi.com.ph.

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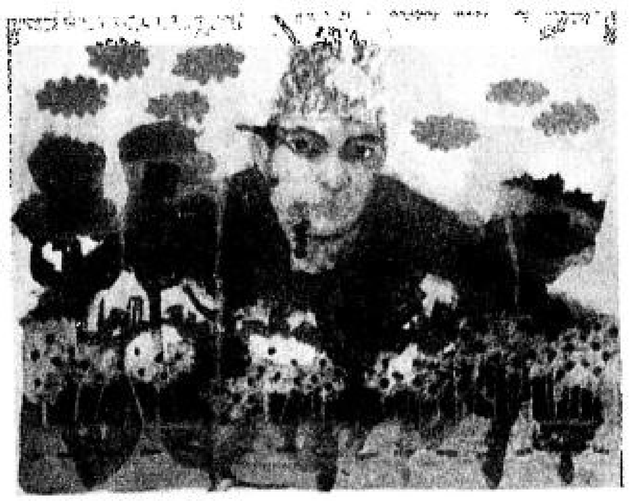
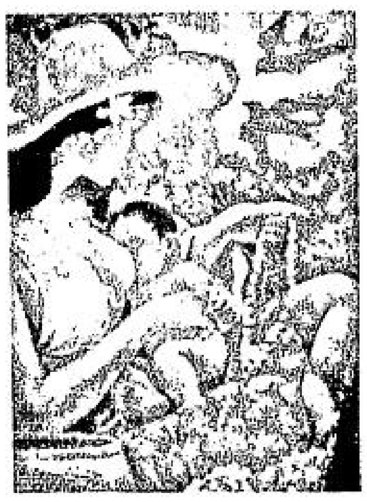
**ARTISTREE** Fine Art is holding a festival featuring 19th century Philippine art. Participating artists include Eliezer Dimaculangan, Fred Ramirez, Omi Reyes, Fidel Sarmiento, Marti Javier, Panilo, Caloy Gabuco, Vic Salta, Norman Dreo, Aner Sebastian and Buds Convocar. The exhibit runs until Feb. 13 at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.



**"RELICS OF TREE-WORSHIP IN MODERN MANILA"** by Jason Moss



**NEMIRANDA'S BIRTHDAY.** Nemiranda, whose birthday falls on Valentine's Day, will open "Love Expressions" on Feb 13, 6 p.m. at the Nemiranda Arthouse (4/L SM Megamall), and on Feb. 14, 6 p.m. at the Nemiranda Art Café and Restaurant in his hometown of Angono, Rizal. Above is "Breastfeeding Madonna with Sampaguita," oil on board. Call 634-1744, 638-4113, or 651-0109.

# Tuazon at Finale; Moss at West Gallery; 'Road art' at Green Papaya

**VISUAL ARTS**

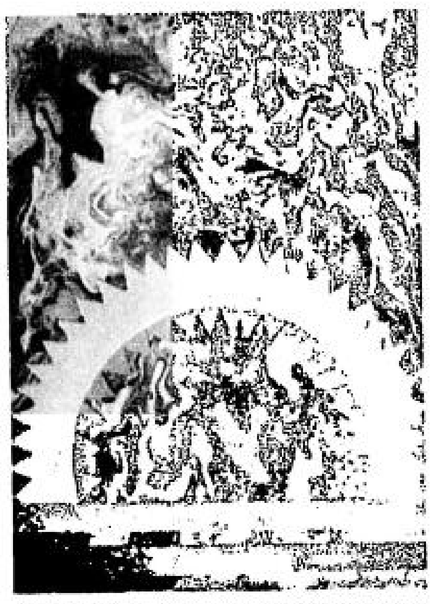
MAVERICK artist Wire Tuazon holds his eighth one-man show, "Unity and Contradiction: The Rise and Fall of Urban Realism," Feb. 13-25 at the Finale Art Gallery (4/L, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City). Tuazon appropriates separate words or phrases and superimposes them on images, often from popular culture, to create a jarring effect. Call 634-2410 and 634-2411.

**MOSS AT WEST GALLERY.** Jason Moss mounts his latest exhibit, "Legerdemain," Feb. 15-27 at the West Gallery (3/L, Ayala Center, Makati City). The exhibit combines Moss' raw, fast-paced brush strokes with subtle and mellow ones which characterized his fourth exhibit, largely based on his sketchbook. Call 752-7028.

**UP STUDENTS AT GREEN PAPAYA.** "Two for the Road" is an exhibit of transmedia works that investigates the paths and boundaries of art and life through the process of walking. The works in the exhibit index walking as a vehicle of observation, a length through which passage from one moment to another is perceived. The artists used various media such as painting, video and photography to articulate their walking experience from the academic setting of the UP College of Fine Arts to the gallery space of Green Papaya (Unit 304, Sterten Place Condominium, 116 Maginhawa St., Teacher's Village, Diliman, Q.C.). They include M.R Pangalinan Arenas, Amy Aragon, Publio Atienza, Joseph Balaoing, Dan Calisura, Patricia Eustaquio, Lea Lim, Libby Limoso, Robby Mananquil, Josue Mangrobang, Kim Sang Sig, Jiyas Suministrado and Marjorie Yu. Curator is Gerardo Tan.

**OSHIMA AT DE LA SALLE-CAVITE.** The Museo De La Salle of De La Salle University in Dasmariñas, Cavite will celebrate the February Art Month by holding a traveling exhibit dubbed "Wood, Stones and Shells: Traditional Filipino Houses from the Metropolitan Museum of Manila." The exhibit features 50 photographs of traditional Filipino houses by Neal Oshima, with text by Fernando Zialcita. The exhibit runs from Feb. 13 to March 31. Call (046)4164554/-56, (02)844-7832, local 3151.

**GROUP EXHIBIT AT THE BIG SKY.** "Pag-ibig Findings," a group exhibit featuring the works of UP fine arts students, opens on Feb. 14, 7 p.m. at Big Sky Mind, New Manila, QC. The exhibit runs until March 18. Participating artists include Chico Beltran, Carmelo Martin Caluag, Dada Docot, Johnny Lao, Kim Landicho, Stanley Ruiz, Brian Sergio, Alvin Zafra and Carlo Zapatos. Call 414-7451, 725-5681 or e-mail big_sky_mind-@hotmail.com.



**"LIFE OF GOLD AND SILVER"** by Lito de Guzman, is part of the exhibit "Abstractions," a three-man show by Ray Esguerra, Lito de Guzman and Nestor Villanueva, at Silahis Arts and Artifacts, 3/F Glorietta 4, Makati. Variations of abstract paintings are on exhibit such as Esguerra's mixed media landscapes using thread, wood, PVA emulsion and other found objects; De Guzman's artistic mixtures of luminous colors; and Villanueva's cubist style of thematic expression. The exhibit runs until Feb. 24. Call 728-4961 or 527-2113.

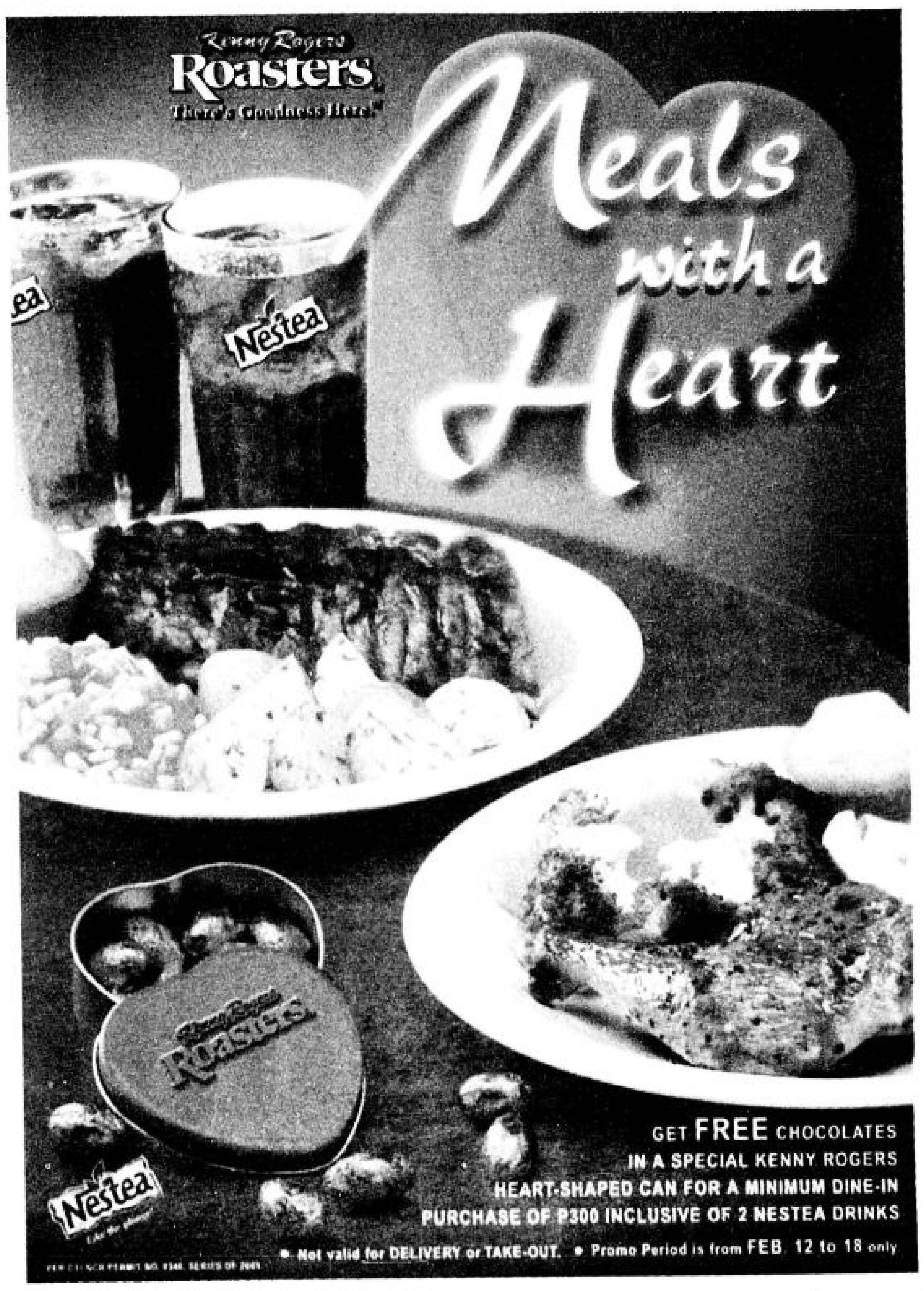
**JAPANESE WATERCOLORIST AT GENLUNA.** International artist Reiko Araki Chastain exhibits her personal collections of watercolor paintings at Genluna Gallery (12 General Luna St., Davao City). The exhibit, which features 28 paintings, runs until Feb. 20. Call (082)226-2104, telefax 221-0296 or e-mail genluna@mozcom.com.

**KATIPUNAN GROUP AT CRIMSON GALLERY.** The Katipunan Group mounts its latest exhibit, "February Images," at Crimson Gallery (140 Katipunan Road, White Plains, QC). Participating artists include Nelson Cabrega, Norris Castillo, Lito de Guzman, Ray Esguerra, Nel Lagda, Nestor Villanueva and Nando Singson. The exhibit runs until Feb. 28. Call 362-3813.

**JUMPAY AT PENGUIN GALLERY.** Arnold C. Jumpay is holding a photo exhibit, "Body Sketches," until March 2 at Penguin Gallery. Call 853-1569.

**TEXTILE EXHIBIT AT CCP.** "SPINcycle," an exhibit featuring the textile collection of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, is on view at the CCP. Supported by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, "SPINcycle" brings together ethnographic display and contemporary art. Participating artists include Alma Urduja Quinto, Katya Guerrero and Alfredo Juan Aquilizan. Call 831-5094 or 832-1125, local 1508 to 1509.

**WORKSHOP.** The Metropolitan Museum of Manila, with Metrobank Foundation, holds a one-day art workshop on Feb. 17. The workshop includes a lecture and demonstration on sculpture by Jerry Araos, and lectures on graphic design and painting by Robert Alejandro and Ferdinand Doctolero. Call 523-7855.



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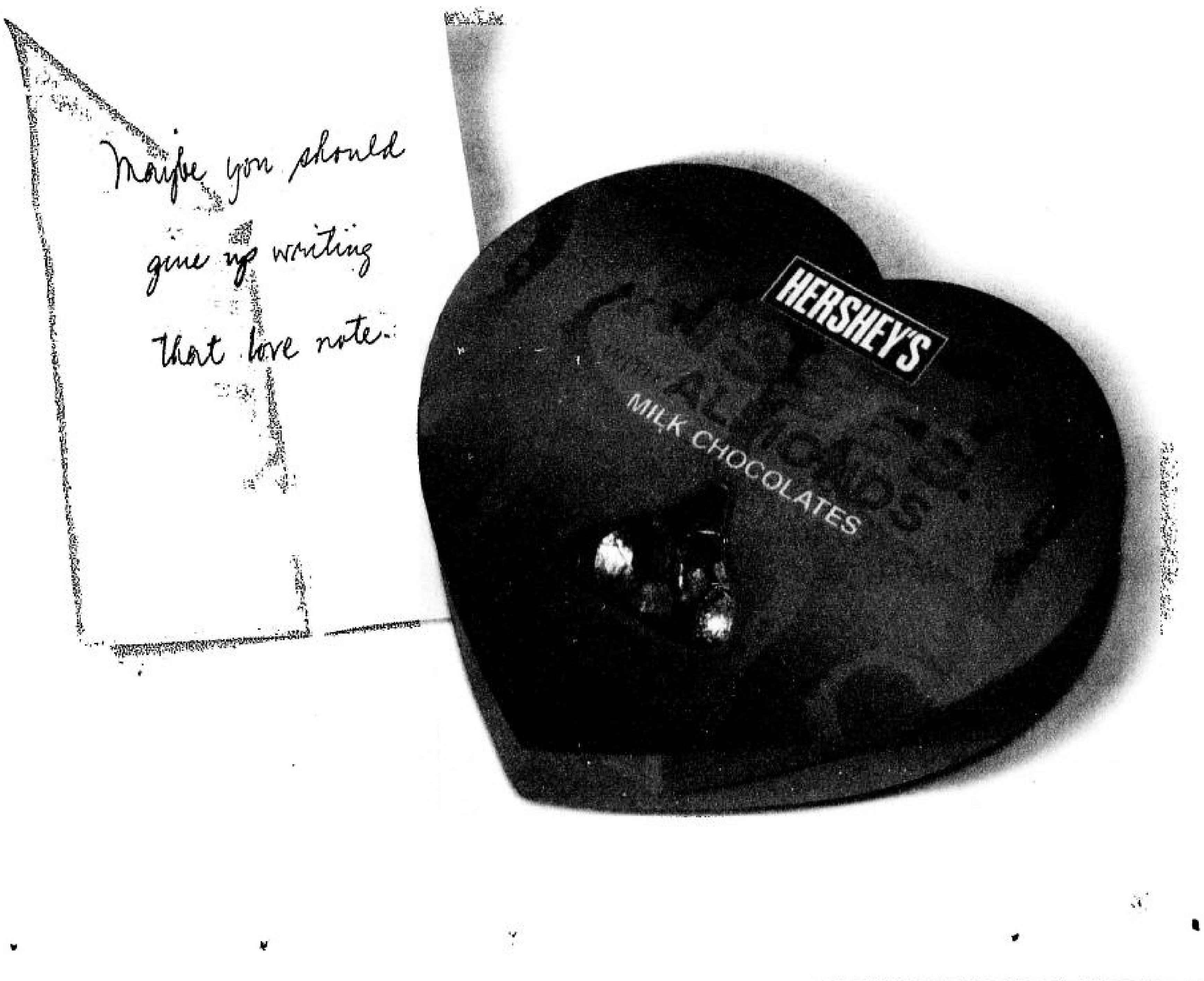
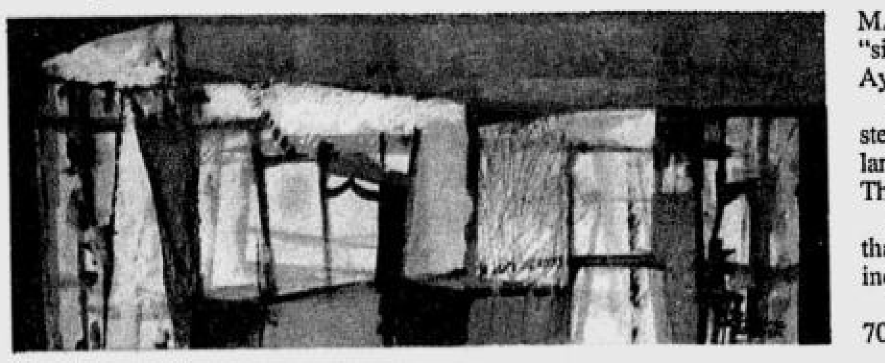


# *Malang continues romance with the 'barong-barong'*



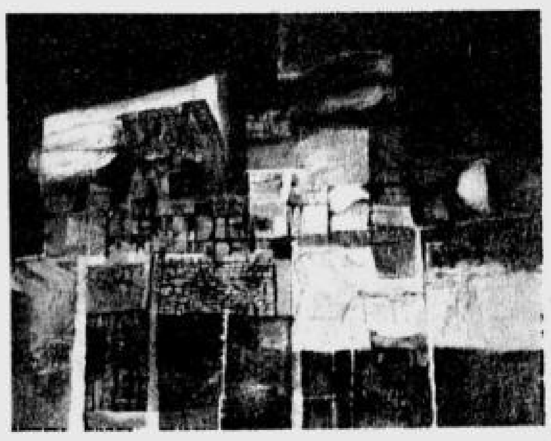
**"WHITE WALLS,"** gouache

MALANG continues his focus on the *barong-barong* with "siyudad@buhay II" at the Glorietta Artspace (3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati) on Feb. 17-27.

The poor men's shanties have always been one of Malang's steady subjects. This time he adds a few nighttime scenes, particularly of vendors. Women still figure prominently on the canvases. The dominant colors are blue, violet and green.

The show will include decades-old drawings and sketches that had been displayed in his first show this year. He says their inclusion will show how much he has fine-tuned his art.

The show formally opens on Feb. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Call 752-7028 and 29, 411-0336, or 411-9221.



**"BLACK SKY,"** oil on canvas

RAYMOND WEIL
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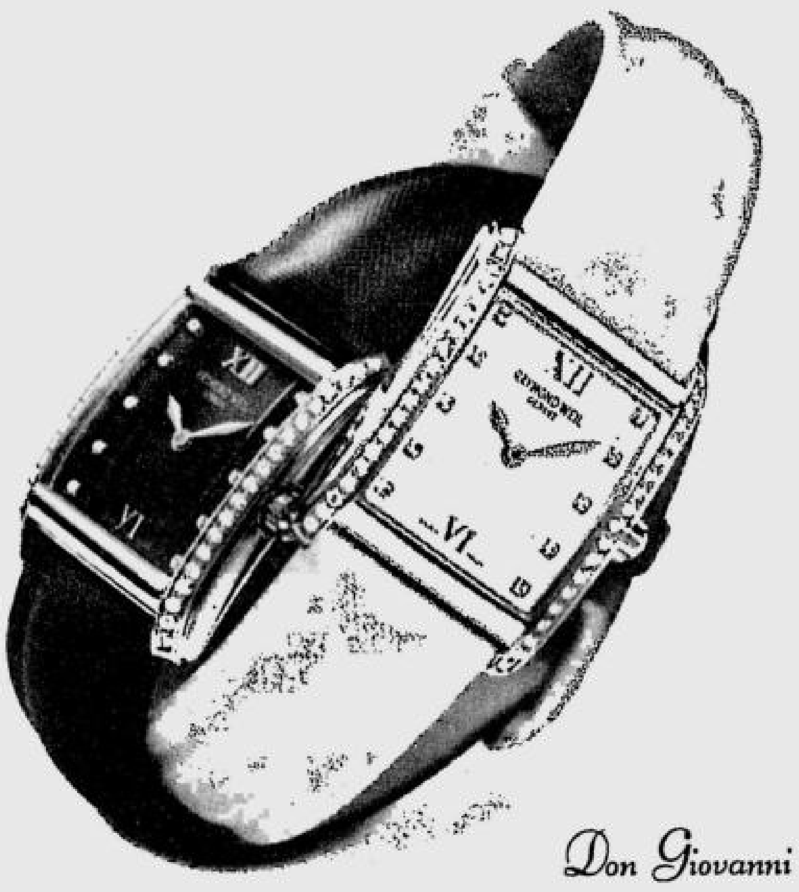

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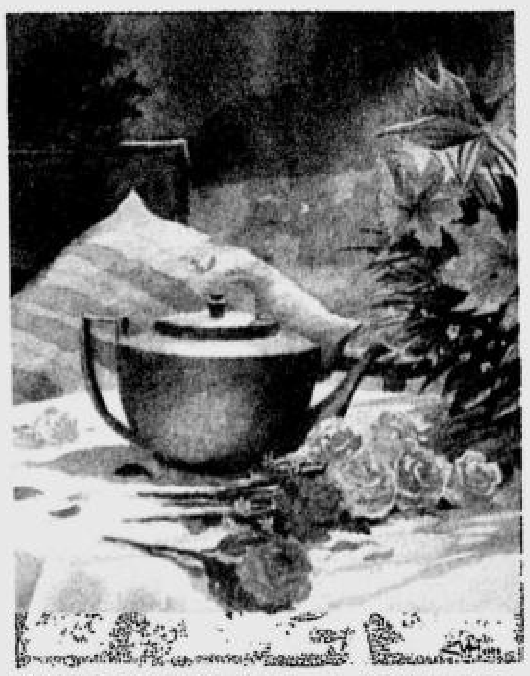
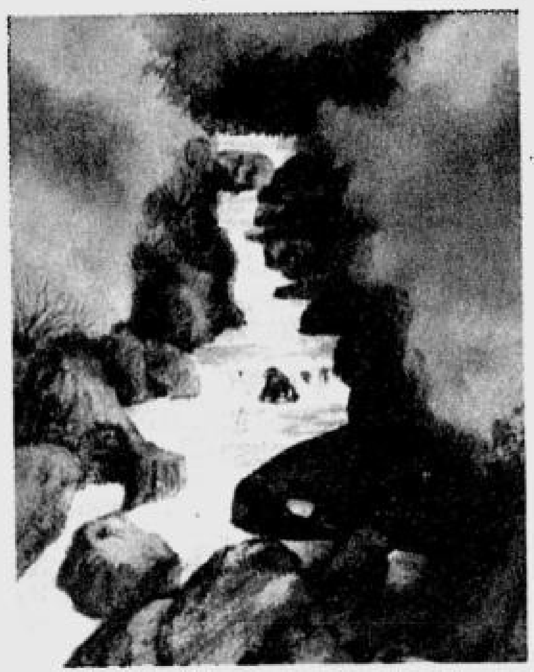
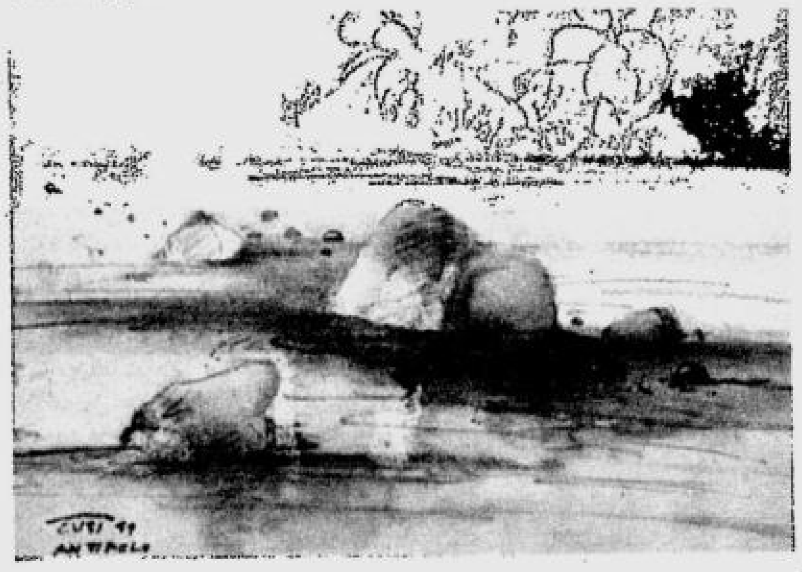


**"THE GREEN KETTLE"** by Andi Cubi, water color on paper



**"AGOS NG BUHAY"** by Egai Fernandez, water color on paper



**"ANTIPOLO"** by Popoy Cusi, aquarelle on paper

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Over 90 works in various media from pastel to oil on canvas, charcoal and mixed media are available at the Ad-Infinitum Galleries (190 F. Blumentritt St., San Juan, Metro Manila).

Since it is celebrating its fourth anniversary, the Blumentritt Group is auctioning high-quality artworks that can be acquired at reasonable prices.

Participating artists include Allan Cosio, Gig de Pio, Andi Cubi, Egai Fernandez, Popoy Cusi, Greg Bolanos, Hermes Alegre, Jaime Roque, Jonah Salvosa, Cito Racho, Gene Gonzalez, Tony Nunez, Jack Teotico, Camille dela Rosa, Jess Puertollano, Nonoy Duran, Offy Garcia, Gino Carlo Tioseco, Tony Penaflor and Gejo Jimenez. The event also showcases artworks by guest artists, pieces from the members' and the art gallery's collections.

The gallery's collection includes artworks by masters Jose Joya, Onib Olmedo, Juvenal Sansó, Bencab, Raul Lebajo, Angelito Antonio and Norma Belleza. Works by Gus Albor and Dominic Rubio are also on exhibit.

Viewing and bidding will run until Feb. 23. Ad-Infinitum Galleries is open every Mondays to Saturdays, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and by appointment on Sundays. Call Christine or Ester at 726-9015 or 724-3032.

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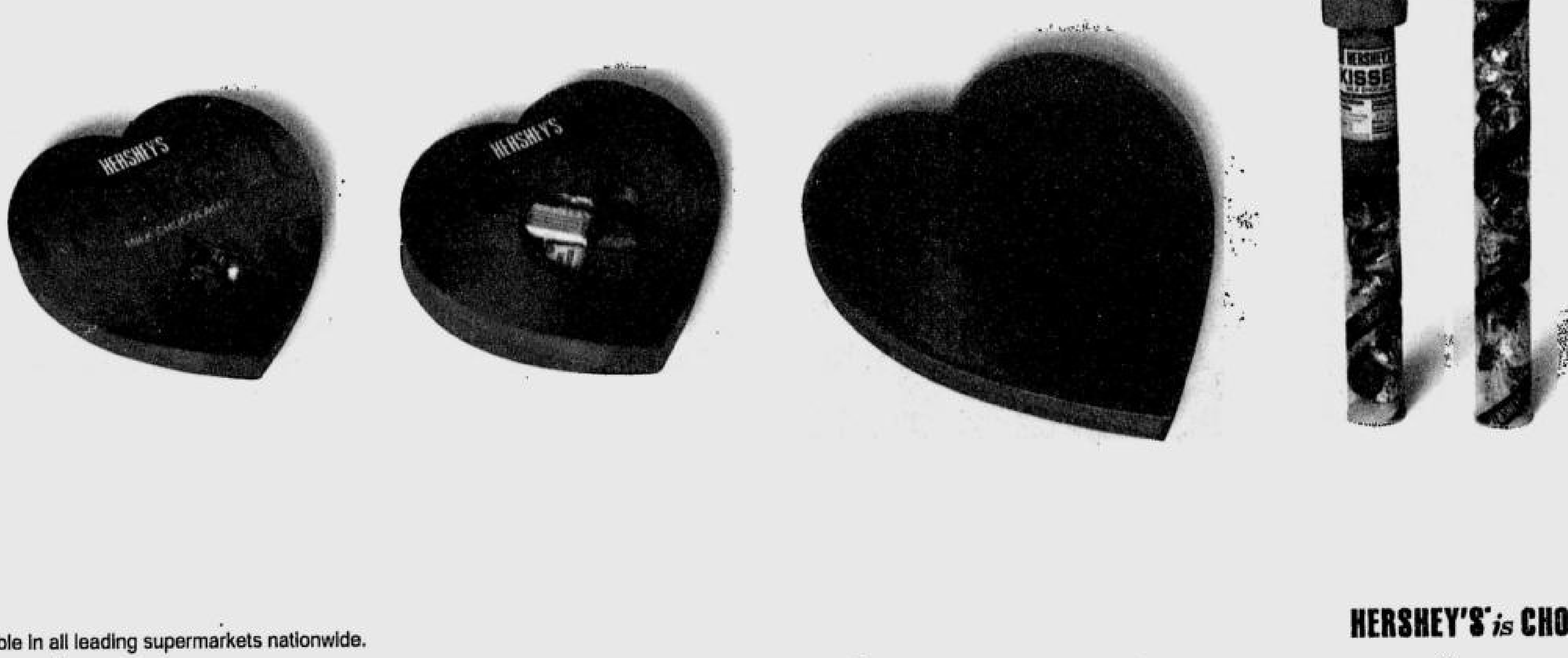

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# Fabulous is the name

## DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

*Amiga*

EVERYONE knew Christmas had arrived when **Arturo** and **Marissa Rocha** turned on the colored lights wrapped around the trees outside their house and their gate sparkling like a green and red Christmas present. Guests at their annual party thought everything was simply fab from the groaning buffets set up by **Marilou Senn** of La Tasca to the gorgeous Christmas tree that drew admiration from Singaporean Ambassador and Mme. **Jackie Foo** (who looked young enough to be college students).

**Patricia Ottiger**, slim as a reed, was lovely in green and looking forward to Christmas in Hawaii with husband **Carl** and the children. My ears weren't long enough to pick up the conversation between **Bobby Romulo** and **John Forbes** (**Evelyn** was entertaining visiting relatives).

After weeks of gloom it was a pleasure seeing **Backie** and **Mike Celdran, Chloe** and **Peping Periquet, Nena** and **Al Casimiro, Lulu Castañeda, Ramon** and **Josie Sy** with wide smiles on their faces. It is after all the season to be jolly, according to **Eddie Rocha**. Seen enjoying the party were Italian Ambassador **Graziella Simbolotti** (with her visiting son) and Danish Ambassador and Mme. **Peter Rosting.**

We spotted **Nando** and **Cris Vasquez Prada, Kathy de Guzman, Vicky Tuason** with niece **Claudia Bermudez, Linggoy Araneta,** Ambassador **Juan** and **Pilina Rocha, Menchu** and **Raul Concepcion, Mercy Tuason** and **Pitoy Moreno** and lots of absolutely cheery people all filled with Christmas spirits in more ways than one.

**NENA** Casimiro and Menchu Concepcion

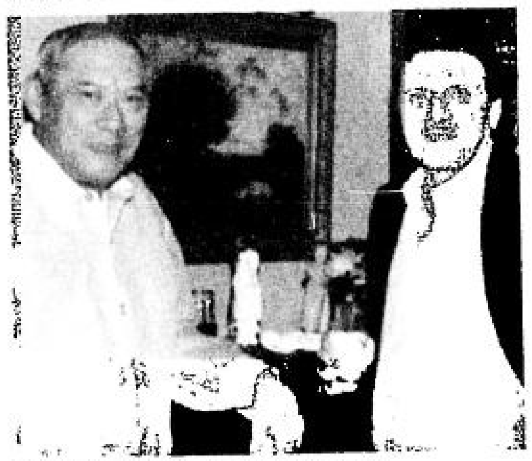
**MARILOU** Senn, Ambassador Juan Rocha and Ma. Theresa Tressler

**AMBASSADOR** Enrique Syquia

**CONNIE** Araneta

**PILINA** Rocha

**ITALIAN** Ambassador Graziella Simbolotti



**RAFAEL** Hechanova and Dr. Peña

**ROBERTO** Romulo and Raul Concepcion

PHOTOS: BETOY JOHNSON

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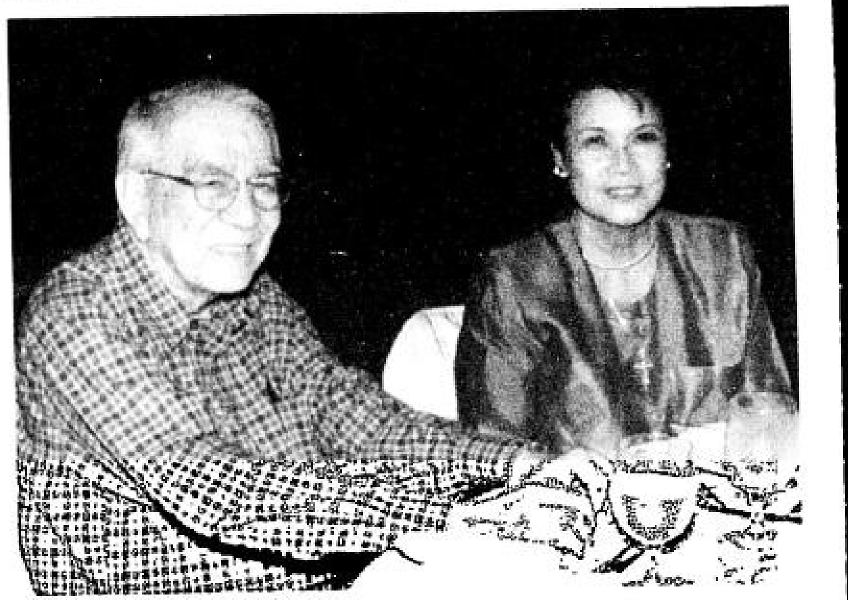


**PEPING** and Chloe Periquet

# Sacred Heart Shrine launches book on St. Mary Margaret

THE NATIONAL Shrine of the Sacred Heart on Dao Street, Makati is celebrating the silver jubilee of its foundation. One of the events lined up is the launching of the book "The Life of St. Mary Margaret Alacoque" and "The Word of the Triune God" by Bishop Crisostomo Yalung, the shrine rector, on Feb. 14, 11:45 a.m.

A jubilee concert will be held at 7 p.m. after the jubilee Mass to be celebrated by Jaime Cardinal Sin at 6 p.m. The Manila Youth Symphony Orchestra, sponsored by Imelda Cojuangco, will perform with the shrine's Apostleship of Prayer and the Charismatic Youth Choir. Light classic and love songs will be played.

The theme of the silver jubilee celebration is: "The Sacred Heart of Jesus, Key to Building the Church."

# A special Valentine menu from Manila Manor

MANILA Manor Hotel on J. Bocobo Street, Malate joins the celebration of Valentine's Day with a "Loving in the Millennium" promo on Feb. 13, 14 to 15. A special menu will be served for lunch and dinner. For only P285 inclusive of service charge and sales tax, one can enjoy an entrée of either Coq Au Vin (chicken cooked in red wine) or fillet mignon steak served with either soup or salad, dessert and coffee or tea. Dessert is Granita, which is puréed fresh fruit mixed with whipped cream and crushed ice. Call 525-9065.

# St. Bartholomew Church in Catbalogan marks centenary of declaration of Mary's dogma

**PURELY PERSONAL**

*Josephine Darang*

IN 1954 when Bishop Maximiano Cruz was still a young parish priest of St. Bartholomew Church in Catbalogan, Samar, the diocese of Calbayog marked the centenary of the declaration of the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX. Father Max decided to celebrate it for three days from Aug. 13-15.

To prepare for the occasion, Father Cruz had the image restored by Ireneo Cristobal in Manila. It was a process called *encarna* where the sculptor removed the old paint from the image, cleaned it and applied new paint. The image was supposed to have arrived in the morning of Aug. 15 by boat from Manila in time for the celebration.

The people waited for her at the pier before dawn, but they fell asleep. One of those waiting for her was Silvestre Davantes, called Imbel, who was then the sacristan. It seemed that the earth was shaking and the bells started to ring at the same time. The hoot of the boat was coming nearer. Suddenly, the people woke up and realized that the Virgin had arrived. They met the boat and carried the Virgin in a procession to the church.

In telling me this story, Bishop Cruz said that the Virgin had to shake the earth, so the people would wake up.

### Canonical coronation in 1995

In preparation for the canonical coronation of Our Lady of Ubanon on Oct. 15, 1995, a replica had to be made, so the image could be brought from town to town in Western Samar and the devotion spread. But it would cost P80,000.

Bishop Cruz had the image brought to sculptor Manolo Natividad in Manila. In the meantime, the money was miraculously raised with donors like lawyer Nilda Torrevillas, Mona Lacanlale and another friend of the bishop giving the money.

Even the crown made by the late James Angeles was paid for. Another miracle was that Pope John Paul II himself blessed the crown when he came to Manila in January 1995.

Finally, the beautiful day came when Cardinal Vidal placed the crown on her head with the people who filled up the shrine clapping, the bells ringing and the choir singing praises to Mary.

The other bishops present upon invitation by Bishop Cruz of Calbayog were Archbishop Pedro Dean of Palo, Bishop Angel Hobayon of Catarman, Bishop Leonardo Medroso of Borongan and Bishop Bactol of Naval, Leyte.

Welcoming the guests was Msgr. Manuel T. Cruz, brother of Bishop Cruz, who was rector of the shrine.

### Other miracles

Lawyer Torrevillas, our host when we were in Catbalogan on Jan. 30, told us how she was helped by the Virgin. She borrowed P3.5 million from Metrobank and used for collateral 863 sq m of lot area surrounding her house and the house itself. She thought all the time that her house would be foreclosed if she would not be able to pay.

But miracle of miracles, she found out later that her house was not included in the collateral and what's more, she and her husband, provincial fiscal Manuel Torrevillas, would be able to pay the loan this year from the sale of another property.

They realized that the miracle occurred because the replica image of the Virgin is enthroned in a niche on the second floor of their house. Nilda told us that we really should be patient when praying to the Virgin. We should patiently wait for answered prayer.

Other miracles, according to Monsignor Cruz, happened to Dolorez Go who could now see, and to a young man who passed the board exams. It was almost impossible that he would pass, but he did after he and his mother prayed to the Virgin in her shrine.

### How to get to the shrine

Those in Manila can either take the plane—PAL, Cebu Pacific or Air Philippines—to Tacloban. From there, buses go to Catbalogan. But groups can be fetched from the airport, according to Bishop Cruz. Another way is to take Philtranco or BLTB in Manila that would pass by Matnog and Allen on the way to Catbalogan. It is another two hours to Catbalogan.

Those in the Visayas can fly from Cebu to Ormoc or take the boat. From Ormoc is two hours to Tacloban. From the pier, one could get a bus or FX to Catbalogan. There is a hotel called Maqueda Bay Hotel where people could stay.

Those interested to make the pilgrimage can call Bishop Cruz or Monsignor Cruz at (055) 251-3104 or lawyer Nilda Torrevillas at (055) 251-3083 or 931-8509 (Quezon City).

After Feb. 16, the new rector of the shrine would be Fr. Dodong Paulino.

### Shrine needs a St. Joseph statue

The shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Ubanon needs a 3-ft statue of St. Joseph as it only has a 1-ft statue. I've ordered a statue made of wood and gold leaf. Those interested to help can beep me at 141-020543.

### Free novenas

Those who are interested in free *estampitas* of Our Lady of Ubanon can write me. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for easier mailing. Those in the Visayas can write Bishop Max Cruz directly c/o The Diocesan Marian Shrine of Our Lady of Ubanon, Catbalogan, Samar.

### Mensa Domini sisters need help

THE MENSA Domini missionary sisters in San Fernando, Sibuyan Island in Romblon need a tricycle that would bring them to the barrios to teach catechism and give value formation to the parents. Those who want to help can beep me at 141-020543.

The tricyle for this particular apostolate is a motorcycle Kawasaki costing P80,000. Thank you for your kindness.

### Mural on Philippine church history

A MURAL on the history of the Philippine church painted by artist Joson will be unveiled on Feb. 18 during the 12 noon Mass in Malate Church. Celebrating the Mass will be Msgr. Emmanuel Sunga.

### We appreciate your help

LORNA Gonzales, the owner of the chapel of the Sto. Niño de Providencia on Pijuan Street, BF Resort Village, Las Piñas City, would like to thank Enjing Gomez for painting the chapel; Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor and Gen. Rudy Hautea for the use of the PAF Band during the procession; Rudy and Ruby Antonio for requesting Francisco Motors to lend the Pope Mobile for the Sto. Niño; Vicky Lejano for lending her pick-up for Ina Poon Bato; Geri and Relly Antonio for lending their jeep for St. Joseph and for the cyclists who led the motorcade to the church.

Thanks to Romeo Tan and Pat Exconde of the Integrated Waste Management for the portalettes; Ling Hernandez for the flowers and décor; Dr. Jocelyn Yambao-Franco, Butch Lopez, Dr. Ofellia Adapon and Betsy Reyes who was healed of breast cancer for the support; the Carmelites in Bacolod, Lipa, Iloilo and Infanta for their prayers; and the GMA crew for covering the event.

Free novenas and oil with rosary and scapular were given for free. Lorna says that nobody is authorized to solicit funds for these things.

### Original Lourdes image in procession

TO MARK the diamond jubilee of the enthronement of Our Lady of Lourdes in the church on Retiro Street corner Kanlaon Street, Bishop Ted Buhain celebrated the Apparition Mass on Feb. 11. The original image of Our Lady Lourdes, which is called *beso-pies*, was brought around in a procession. For the first time, the images of St. Bernadette Soubirous, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Therese of the Child Jesus joined the procession.

An exhibit of Marian images opened on Feb. 3 with the theme "Yo soy Immaculata Concepcion." The *hermanos mayores* who gave support to the exhibit were Louie and Mely Ablaza, Chito Borromeo, Alex and Nick Bonto, Victor Ferrer Jr., Cristina Nell-Sanchez, Danny and Pining Reyes and Joselito and Amelita Tengco.

### Construction of St. Peter Chapel

BARANGAY Buyoan in Legazpi City has begun construction of a new St. Peter Chapel and the parishioners need help. Fr. Nic Bilono III is the parish priest.

Elena Azupardo, in her letter, describes the barrio as 8 km from Legazpi and has a population of 600 households, 95 percent of whom are Roman Catholics.

The chapel is being built on a newly bought area of 600 sq m, which is 120 meters away from the old chapel. Please help by writing to Fr. Nic Bilono c/o St. Peter Chapel in Buyoan, Legazpi City. Thank you for your kindness.

### St. William fiesta

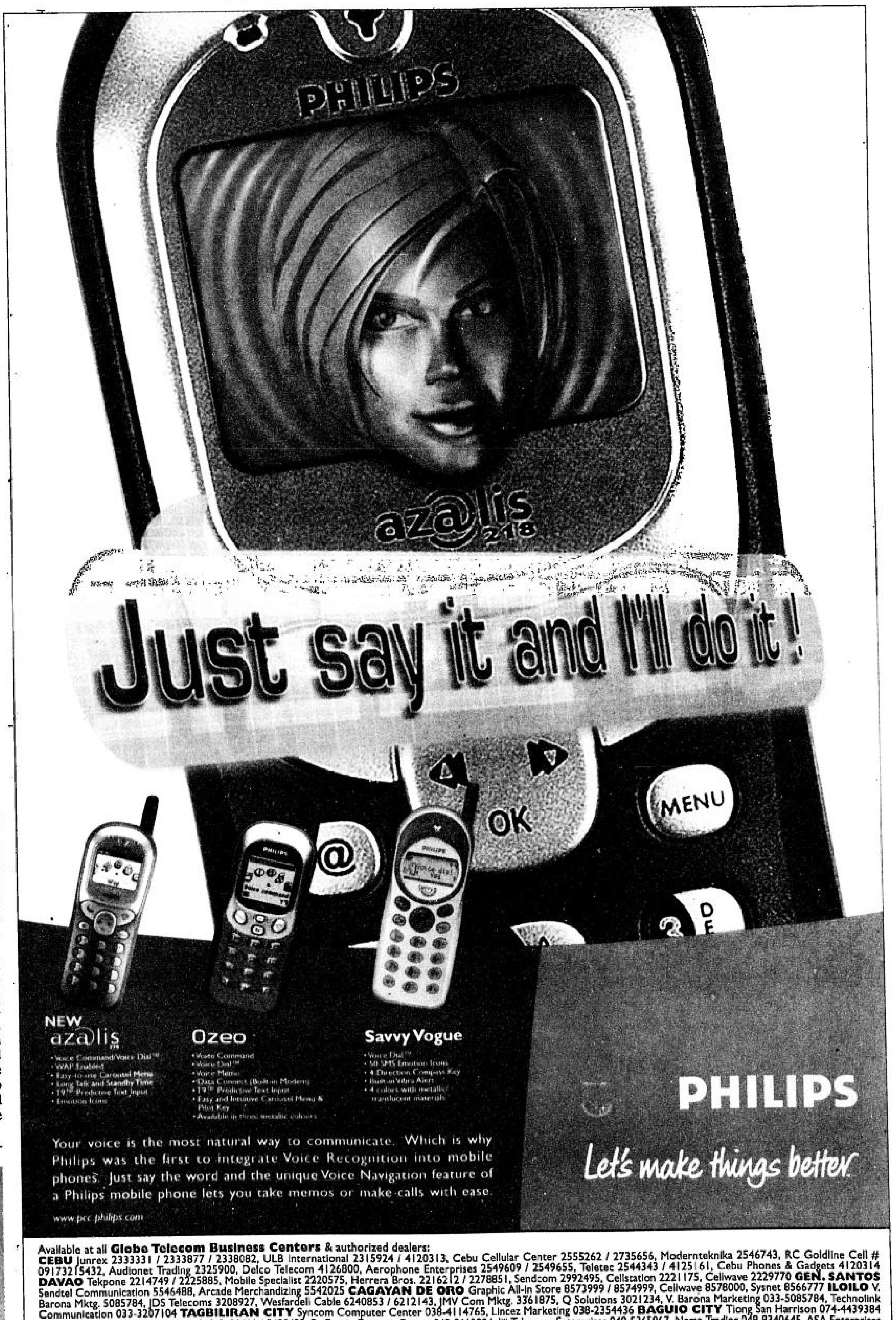
LAOAG City marked its fiesta on Feb. 10, feast of St. William, the patron of the town. St. William's Cathedral is the church where I was baptized and received my First Communion. Happy feast day, St. William.

**OUR** Lady of Ubanon

**LAWYER** Nilda Torrevillas, Bishop Max Cruz and Msgr. Manuel Cruz with Our Lady of Ubanon

PROVIDENCIA

**CHAPEL** owner Lorna Gonzales with a child in front of the Sto. Niño de Providencia



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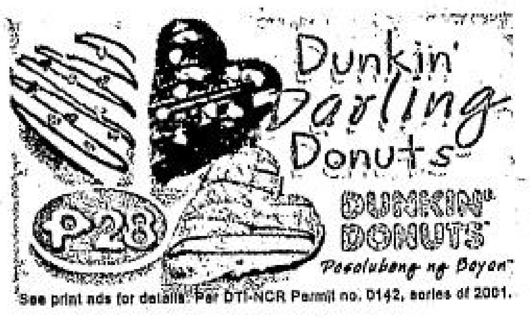
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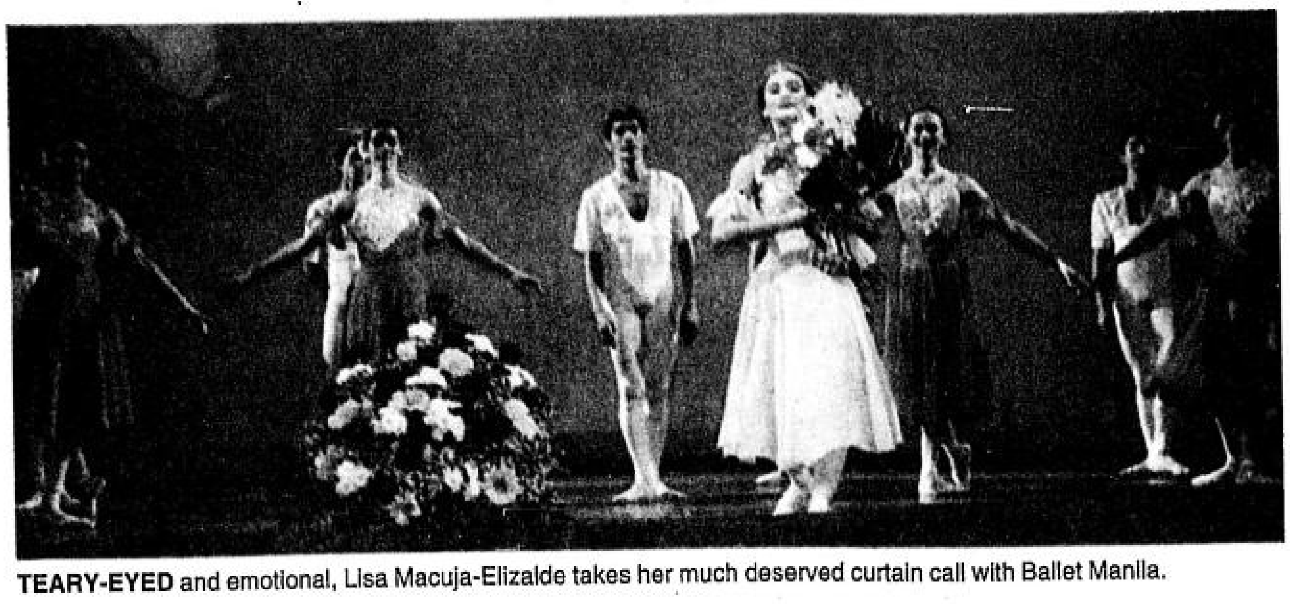

**TEARY-EYED** and emotional, Lisa Macuja-Elizalde takes her much deserved curtain call with Ballet Manila.

Lisa Macuja, the first foreigner to become a soloist of Kirov Ballet, makes a triumphant homecoming

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# Ballet Manila fires up Russian winter festival

BY ANGELA BLARDONY URETA

**TEARS of triumph welled in the ballerina's eyes as she led her young troupe through the centuries-old backstage halls of the Kirov Ballet—the 250-year-old bastion of dance in Russia's cultural capital, St. Petersburg.**

Although Moscow was generally recognized as the seat of politics and commerce, St. Petersburg (also known in modern history as Leningrad) remained the irrefutable center of the arts. And at the heart of this bustling city was the Kirov, whose legendary ballerinas and danseurs had enthralled the crowned heads of Europe and the world's finest connoisseurs of dance for over two centuries.

It was here, on the same stage that witnessed the astounding gifts of Nijinsky, Karsavina, Makarova, Nureyev and other fabled Russian dancers, that a 21-year-old Filipina became the first foreigner to become a soloist of Kirov Ballet. Lisa Macuja, who graduated at the top of her class at the Vaganova Choreographic Institute, debuted as "Don Quixote's" Kitri opposite the dashing Farouk Ruzimatov in 1986—and pirouetted her way into the hearts of Russian balletomanes.

Last month, exactly 15 years after that momentous occasion, Macuja—now artistic associate of her own company and a mother of two—made a sentimental journey back to the cradle of her professional career. Sharing the poignant experience was BM artistic director Eric V. Cruz, principal danseur Osias Barroso, and the youthful soloists and members of Ballet Manila who were on a four-city International Winter Festival tour that saw them dancing with abandon in sub-zero temperature.

BM Principal Dancers Osias Barroso and Lisa Macuja-Elizalde proudly posing in front of Ballet Manila's Poster for the St. Petersburg performance

The ballet entourage was composed of soloists Pamela Asprer, Elline Damian, Aileen Gallinera, Sandralynn Huang, Christopher Mohnani and brothers Eduardo, Jeffrey and Jerome Espejo; company members Eileen Lopez, Marcus Tolentino, Aldrin Villanueva, Sofia Sangco; apprentices Zaira Cosico, Jonathan Janolo and Nathaniel Engay; and company scholars Marian Faustino and Gabrielle Conde, with production assistant Mike Santillan.

"I can't believe this is happening," said a visibly moved Macuja, as the group was welcomed by her former coach, Galina Petrovna Kekisheva, who personally guided them around the theater and company rehearsal halls. Soon word got around about the Filipino visitors and one by one, Macuja's former mentors, classmates and colleagues dropped by to greet her. By this time, they had all heard of the group's performances in Krasnoyarsk, Ioshkar-Ola and Nizny Novgorod, as their SRO concerts had been attended by the states' respective heads of government and were featured extensively in national media

("Those young dancers must be terrific," exclaimed Radio Russia bureau chief Elena Maizel, who showed us an article about Ballet Manila in Aeroflot's January in-flight maga-

BALLET/ p.E7

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# 'Rent' Manila opens in Singapore

The head of Singapore Repertory Theater said he helped bring the Manila production to town because while he was unmoved by the New York staging, the Manila version moved him to laughter and tears

By Cora Llamas

FILIPINO theatrical talent plays once again to an international audience with the performance of the Manila production of "Rent" at Singapore's prestigious Victoria Theater from Feb. 10 to March 4.

The Atlantis version of Jonathan Larson's hard-hitting musical on sex, homosexuality, AIDS and angry yuppies finding love and acceptance in a tough world, will run for eight shows a week for one month. The show was a huge hit in Manila two years ago, garnering standing ovations, rave reviews and an extended two-month run.

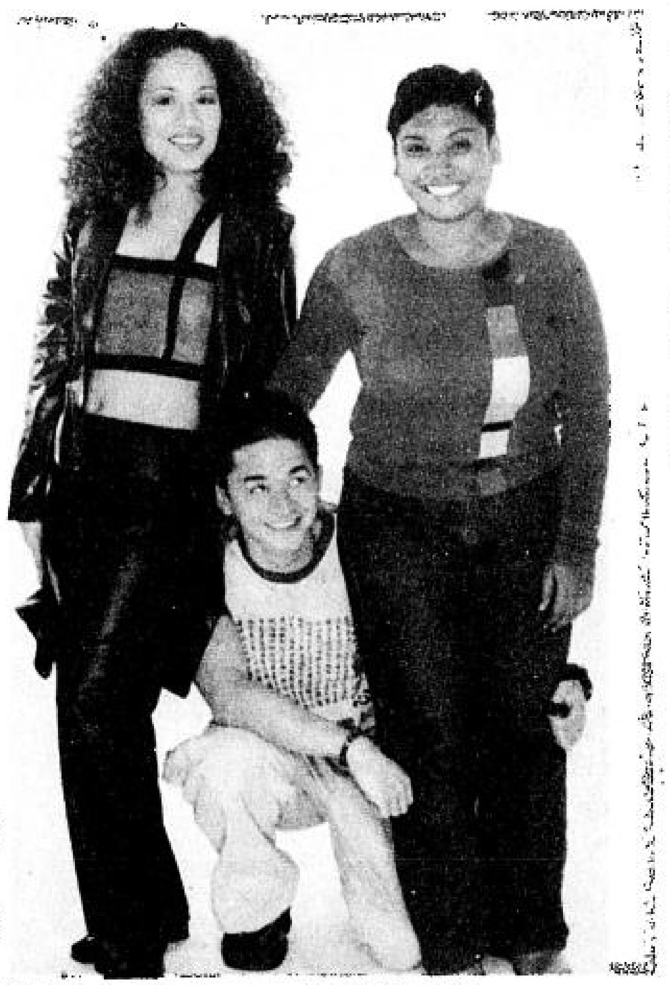
The new show is produced by Singapore Repertory Theater (SRT), which brought "They're Playing Our Song," starring Lea Salonga, to Manila last year.

However, according to director Bobby Garcia, who also heads Atlantis, the feel and vision of the original "Rent" will remain intact, supported by its predominantly Filipino cast and creative team.

Many of the original cast from "Rent" Manila returned to play their old roles: Calvin Millado as Roger, the dying guitarist trying to strum up his only hit record; JM Rodriguez as Mark, the narrator who films in poignant detail the lives and passions of the men and women who frequent the condemned New York apartment; and Michael de Mesa, as the anti-establishment AIDS-infected tech genius.

Garcia invited popular figures in the concert scene to play important parts. In a departure from her role as the headstrong feminist in "firewaterwoman," diva Rachel Alejandro plays the desperate, looking-for-love Mimi. Singer Anna Fegi, the indecisive Pilate in Atlantis' "Jesus Christ Superstar," appears as the calculating, two-timing, but very charismatic bisexual Maureen.

Singaporeans, chosen by Garcia from the 150 who auditioned in the Lion City, play the other critical parts: Pam Oei is Joanne, Maureen's gay lover; and Brendon Fernandez (who is of Portuguese lineage) as Benny, the moneymaking apartment owner who trades in friendship for profit; actor-choreographer Richard Chia; and newcomer Asha Edmonds.



ANNA Fegi, Carlo Ledesma and Asha Edmonds

### Asian flavor

"Rent" is the next wave of Filipino artists making their mark in Singapore. Only last month, about a dozen Pinoy performers, especially leads RJ Rosales and Roy Rollodo, wowed the audiences in "Chang & Eng," a musical about the Siamese twins. At the same time, Monique Wilson, Dulce Aristorenas and Tami Monsod showed Singaporean audiences an entirely new side to sexuality in the hit "The Vagina Monologues."

Part of the huge appeal of "Rent" Manila was that it fused a distinct Asian flavor to a storyline peopled by GenX Americans. The lingo was definitely New York, the music was MTV rock, the attitude of the characters was in-your-face. It's hard to imagine this kind of loud, paradigm-shattering production playing in quiet, orderly, law-abiding Singapore.

But "Rent" Manila gave SRT general manager Gaurav Kripalani other ideas.

According to Garcia, while "Rent" New York left Kripalani indifferent, its counterpart in Manila shook him to laughter and tears. The SRT head found the Manila performances more powerful than the ones in the Big Apple.

The main ingredient that made it different was "the emotion," says Garcia.

It's an open secret in the international theater circuits that Pinoy artists, who sing and dance up a storm, also pack in a maelstrom of emotions. Love, sadness, rage, triumph, happiness, despair—the sentiments etched in the body language and faces of the performers can sometimes be more moving than the lyrics.

"The Filipino talent is being recognized in Asia and all over the world," says Garcia, who has helmed productions on both sides of the Pacific.

A couple of years ago, the thirtysomething New York-based director had originally planned to stay in Manila only during the "Rent" run. The evolving landscape of a Filipino theater that was growing in maturity and choice of materials, while attracting a young audience, presented to him "exciting possibilities" that he wanted to explore.

"We [Filipino artists] can't just stay in anymore. We're a global community, and the world is growing smaller every day. The Filipinos are being invited to show their talent to the world."

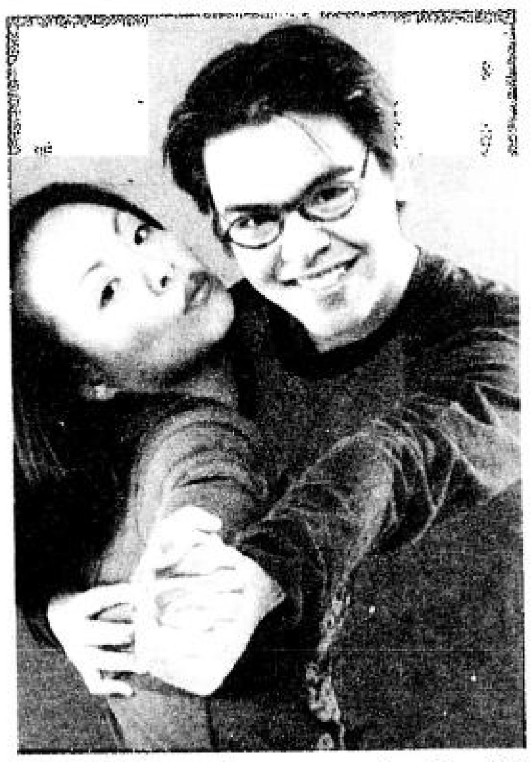
CALVIN Millado leads "Rent " cast.

### Universal emotion

Why not, when by sheer performance and emotion (there's that word again), they can make a play's limited, localized setting so real to a universal audience.

In "Rent's" case, it was the message that "we should accept people as they are; and forgetting where you came from and realizing we're all the same underneath, with the same dreams and the same need for community and [belonging]."

Garcia also points out "the struggles that the characters go through are universal and [transcend] cultural boundaries."



JM Rodriguez with Singaporean actress Pam Oei

Garcia is still in the fast lane of shattering conventions. After "Rent" Singapore closes, he hopes to finally mount Terence McNally's controversial "Corpus Christi," which had incensed right-wing religious groups in the US.

He makes it a point to clarify, "This is *not* a gay Jesus Christ play. It's set in modern times in Corpus Christi, Texas. It's about a man's life who parallels Christ's life and who happens to be gay, but he's not Jesus Christ."

Other plans in the musical-theater pipeline are "Headwing and the Angry Inch," an off-Broadway show about a transvestite with a botched sex-change operation; and a rock opera based on "Sleeping Beauty," being written by Garcia and rock band Wolfgang.

"I don't do children's shows," Garcia laughs at the thought. "It's an adult [piece]."

Not that he purposely goes out of his way to find controversial plays just for the heck of doing it. His past choices—"Superstar," "How I Learned to Drive," Virgil Vogel's haunting study of incest and child abuse, "Rent"—were made just because he thought they were "pretty good."

"Let's put it up and see if the audience likes it."

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# *Singaporeans pay 'Rent'*

By JEROME B. GOMEZ

Singaporeans share the same stage as Filipinos—and are a little overwhelmed

"525,600 minutes..." as the hook of the musical's carrier song goes, and still ticking. After releasing a special four-cut Filipino cast album last year, this February, Bobby Garcia's production of the Jonathan Larson musical "Rent" has set its sights on Singapore for a month-long run. And as if to emphasize the Pulitzer Prize-winning play's celebration of diversity—or just to make that extra connection with the Lion City audience—this production has included four Singaporean actors in the mostly Filipino cast.

The musical, about the lives and loves of New York's young bohemians surviving in the time of AIDS, is the kind of play whose main strength lies less on individual performances and more on the ensemble. This, says Singaporean actor Brendon Fernandez, lessens the pressure. "The thought of singing onstage with the Filipino cast was just really, really threatening," the tall, lean 21-year-old says. "I've seen them perform. And the best vocal teachers in Singapore are Filipinos."

Fernandez, one of the two Singaporeans essaying lead parts (the other being Pamela Oei, who plays Joanne, lover and director of the performance artist Maureen), takes on the role of Benny, the young capitalist-type who wants to transform a performance art space into a cyber café.

### Jittery

Although he has been in a number of theater productions back home, including an Asian-penned play called "The Theory of Everything," which was later brought to Los Angeles, "Rent" is Brendon's first musical. He never expected to become part of the production but went to the audition anyway when coproducer Singapore Repertory Theater (who brought "They're Playing Our Song" to Manila last year) gave him a call. He is first to admit he is not a singer and has only undergone training a month before the "Rent" rehearsals in Manila began.

Aside from the pressure of being on the same stage with Filipinos, Brendon is also jittery about the fact that a lot of his friends have bought the original cast recording CD of "Rent" and are raving about it. And then there are the Singaporean critics.

"I think the expectation is very high," says Brendon. "If you have a mixed nationality cast, (the media critics) wait for the Singaporeans to actually slip, they wait for us to mess up. Maybe they just don't want us to lose face in front of the other nationalities. Thankfully, 'Rent' is not about competition, it's about the ensemble. The audience in general is also difficult to impress but if they are impressed, when you give them something they really loved, they'll tell you about it."

### Dream role

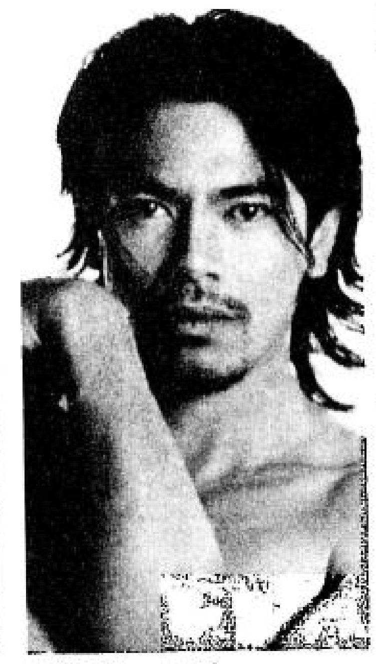
Opening on the 10th at the Victoria Theater, the rest of Rent's Singaporean cast includes Asha Edmonds and Richard Chia who will be part of the ensemble. The Pinoy ensemble members are Boyd Tinio, Joel Trinidad, Gloria Sicam, Lana Jalosjos, Manman Angsico, Beatrice Gomez and Carlo Ledesma. Michael de Mesa reprises his father-figure role as Tom Collins.

A Filipino actor in the cast who is perhaps more excited than all the others—and maybe feeling less pressured than Brendon—is "Miss Saigon's" German production alumnus Jake Macapagal. He is playing the role of his dreams: Angel, a transvestite PWA who becomes an inspiration to bohemia land after his death.

Ever since his friends told him about "Rent" and that "I have a role *daw* there," Jake, tall, dusky, with the body of a dancer, has been pursuing the part of Angel. "Love *ko talaga 'yung* role."

He auditioned for it in the German and Australian productions. He got eight callbacks in Germany but never made the final casting; another Pinoy did. "I know I'd like to be able to do it someday whether it's in the Middle East or in China, anywhere," Jake recalls. After the rejection in Germany, "I had two years to practice my vocal chords. During the callbacks and the benefit show (where Jake got to play Angel in a short excerpt of "Rent") I already knew what I was lacking. My singing was not good enough. It took two years for me to grow, in those two years a lot has happened in my life that made me grow."

BRENDON Fernandez



JAKE Macapagal

Some of those things that happened in his life include leaving "Miss Saigon," where he was part of the chorus for five years, pretending to be a GI every single day. He was unemployed for quite some time except for doing modeling in the twice-a-year buyers' show of Hugo Boss and earning "black money," a term for wages earned from non-contract work like part-time waitering. The monotony of life in Stuttgart was depressing but he did want to work on his residency. "Last year was very difficult," Jake says. "I couldn't get into another show, I couldn't get into 'Beauty and the Beast,' even if I didn't want to be a spoon for a year."

For someone who spent most of his theater life as part of the chorus of Rep's productions of "Les Misérables" and "My Fair Lady," you cannot blame Jake for refusing to play a spoon in a fairy tale.

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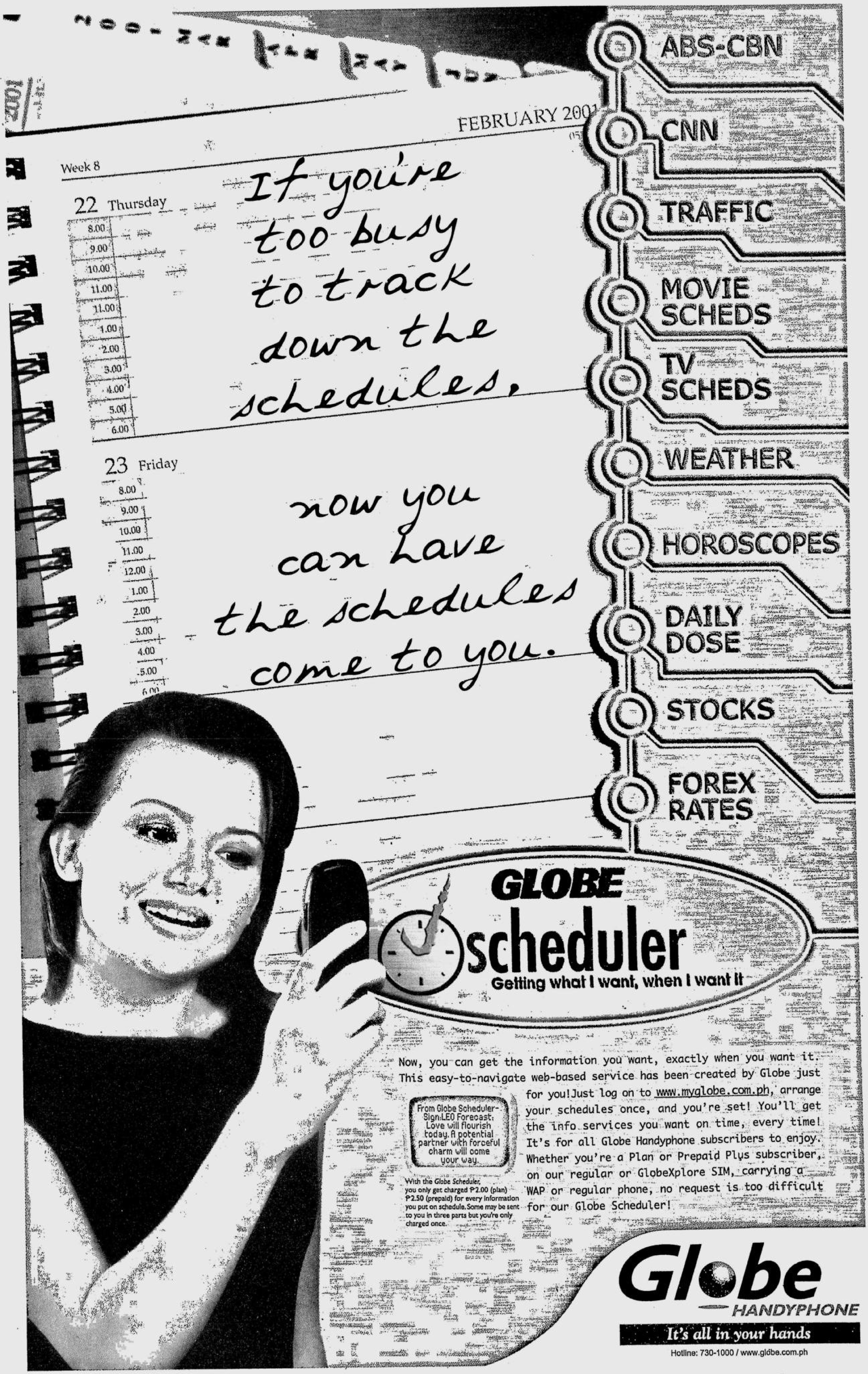
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# Young Singapore poets get a taste of people power

BY CARLOMAR
ARCANGEL DAOANA

**ARRIVING during the height of the Edsa II revolt, four poets from Singapore rocked Manila campuses with their own brand of poetry, not downright sentimental or mushy, but interrogative and inquisitive of Singapore's cross-cultural identity, historical memory and materialist orientation. Definitely not so easy stuff to articulate.**

**ALVIN** Pang

**HENG** Siok Tian

**FELIX** Cheong

**AARON** Lee

With their get-up and looks, you might think of them as yuppies coming smack right into the Philippine wasteland. And that would be justified. Felix Cheong is a training manager with CNBC, Alvin Pang is the webmaster of Poetry Billboard, Aaron Lee is a legal counsel for an aircraft leasing company, and Heng Siok Tian, the only woman in the group, is a professor.

But this is not the end of them. Sizzling with bravura and raw energy, they have already published their own collections that are shaping the literary landscape of Singapore so that, it seems, the city-state now stands on a cultural fault line. Cheong's books are "Temptation and Other Poems" and "I Watch the Stars Go Out," while Siok's are "Crossing the Chopsticks" and "My City, My Canvas." Lee, author of "A Visitation of Sunlight," is the co-editor of "No Other City: The Ethos Anthology of Urban Poetry" with Pang, a graduate from the University of York (UK), whose collection is called "Testing the Silence."

### University tour

Arranged by the Philippine Literary Arts Council (PLAC), headed by Alfred "Krip" Yuson, the reading took-off on Jan. 17, at the University of Santo Tomas' Center for Creative Writing and Studies headed by Ophelia A. Dimalanta. The visiting poets engaged in a joint reading with poets-alumni of UST, including Dimalanta, Ramil Digal Gulle, Lourd de Veyra, Alma Anonas, Nerisa Guevara and Carlomar Daoana. It was there where they had their first taste of people power, when students held a noise barrage at the nearby Faculty of Medicine, Surgery Building. Of course, the day before, the Senate impeachment court cast its infamous vote to suppress evidence against former President Joseph Estrada.

Here during the tumultuous days of revolt and passion, four Singapore poets find new words, new worlds

On Thursday, when people were forming a human chain from the statue of Ninoy Aquino in Makati to that of Our Lady of Peace on Edsa, the visitors were at the Ateneo de Manila University to read and discuss their poetry in a forum made possible by the English, Filipino and Interdisciplinary Studies departments, along with the Heights literary journal. Ateneo poets who joined the reading and discussion included Rofel Brion, Salvador Bernal, Benilda Santos, Danny Reyes, Connie Jan Maraan, Jonathan Chua, Gad Lim and Mookie Katigbak.

The tour was capped on Friday night, when the visitors had their farewell reading at Sanctum in Intramuros, the new haven for the Spoken Word poetry readings run by Triccia David and Aslie Aslanian. It was graced by PLAC poets RayVi Sunico, Ricky de Ungria and Yuson. The Singaporean poets said their good wishes for the country, which would go through a shift of government the following day, Saturday, the day when they had to leave for Singapore.

**SINGAPORE** guests with senior Filipino poets such as Ophelia Dimalanta (seated, left) and Kryp Yuson (standing, second from left) at UST.

### No other city

With the publication of "No Other City: The Ethos Anthology of Urban Poetry," a collection of poems either singing of and lamenting Singapore as a city, editors Pang and Lee have addressed current spatial realities of Singapore and ushered in a new kind of poetry, the kind which is outward-looking rather than introspective, visionary rather than archeologic.

"It is a kind of reaction, a way from the run-of-the-mill kind of poetry in Singapore, questioning whether Singapore has identity, whether or not we have moved from our colonial hang-over…What we see our role is that we want to raise new issues, more relevant to younger people," Lee explains.

The compulsion for young writers to articulate their thoughts and sentiments about Singapore is rooted in their attachment to it. Singapore teaches them how to create their configurations in seeing and experiencing the world, "the world that is changing very rapidly, sometimes a little too quickly" as Lee puts it.

This makes the young writers more aware of and focused on present situations and activities rather than those in the past. They are often accused by the older people as stricken with historical amnesia.

"With the frequent recreation and renewal of physical landscape, we have so little to hang on to in terms of memories, in terms of traditions both social and spiritual and cultural," Lee continues. Although this cancels the space for altruistic nostalgia, it evolves a new tool for definition. He adds that this compulsion "is the heart of the new search." And since Singapore is "in a glass-box experiment" which makes the "effects of change exaggerated because of the speed of that change," new forms of articulations are being triggered.

This does not mean, however, that the young writers have fully divorced themselves from the past.

"I think the young generations of writers have a different relationship with the past than the writers before them. I think that there is a sense that we are starting fresh, starting to be free. The past is not something that hangs very heavy on them…I think that they have the sense that they live their own lives. They have to create something that is very much their own," Pang explains.

And during the process of looking back, they sometimes find gaps in their historical narratives, which they seek to explain, interrogate, and in the end, to heal.

Alvin says, "A part of what some young writers do is to try and find those missing links, those gaps in their past to fill their own memories. But there is a great sense in general that the past and the future are very much something they want to own and create for themselves. It's not something they inherit, it's something that they build…Even the past has been made new."

Nobody knows where all of this is leading to. But one thing is for sure: that in the global enterprise of letters, Singaporean literature has made its way and is definitely being heard.

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# Inner journeys and landscapes

**Riding Towards the Sunrise**
*By Alice Sun-Cua*
*Anvil Publications*
*108 pp.*

BY OPHELIA ALCANTARA-DIMALANTA

REVIEW

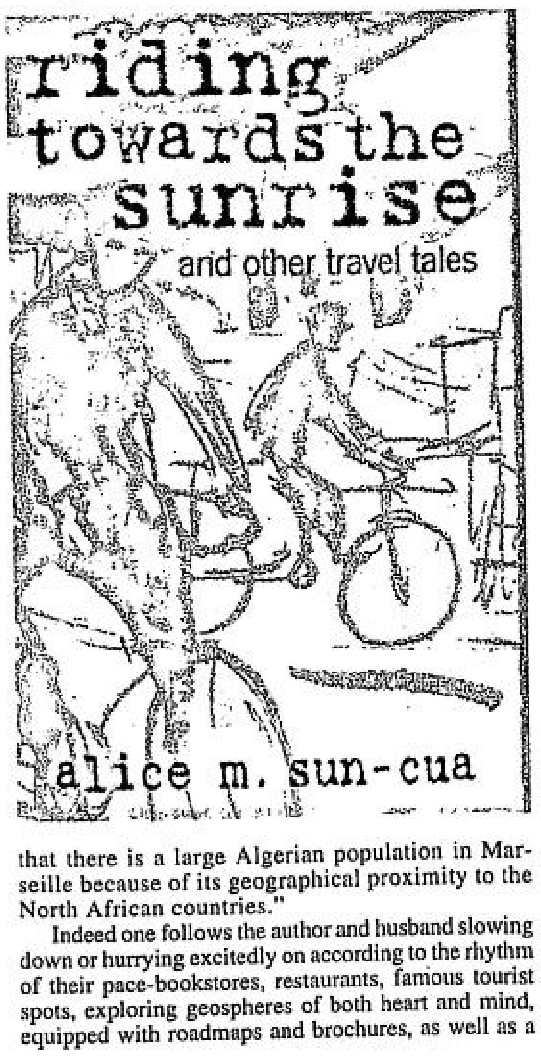
THIS is one delightful read which the reader could pick up during those lazy Sunday afternoons for a leisurely perusal, for illuminating insights and sheer high pleasure. Reading through the 20 travel tales of Alice Sun-Cua, also a poet, a gynecologist, can be as exhausting as having actually gone through the journeys with the author to different countries and terrains, such as (take a deep breath now) Southern China, Bahrain, Thailand, France, Australia, New South Wales, Korea, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, East Java. Taking in the book in one slouching, the reader drags heavy feet as she limps fagged out toward the end, the author wrapping up with lavish description of food and more food, grilled lobsters, chicken in lemon grass, mooncakes, etc, poetically throwing a haze of light from a mid-autumn moon, laced with the music of the tide after a ride on a lake and climbing steps to a Balinese temple, and just very simply, achingly, ending with…remembering Father.

### Empathy

Empathy has been almost total, the trips having been so vividly described, the traipsing, stumbling into and through places quite wrenching. Each tale should be savored, given special attention, each detail slowly taken in. For one distinctive quality of the author is her way of making the reader see landscapes, streets, crowds, people, individuals, their physiognomy, costumes, mannerisms and gestures, habits, with the author constantly making comments, in a style which could be direct, simple, nostalgic, at times even almost reverential.

The author alternates between a descriptive exposition, which is analytic and factual, and imaginative description, which is synthetic building up images and impressions. And a combination of the two is what makes a travel tale different from the travel essay. Imaginative description: "suddenly I was in Ali Baba's cave surrounded by flashing golden jewelry." Descriptive exposition: "we noticed many African (and Arabic)-looking people and remembered from previous readings that there is a large Algerian population in Marseille because of its geographical proximity to the North African countries."

Physician Alice Sun-Cua dissects her travels and wanderings in prose surgical and magical.



Indeed one follows the author and husband slowing down or hurrying excitedly on according to the rhythm of their pace-bookstores, restaurants, famous tourist spots, exploring geospheres of both heart and mind, equipped with roadmaps and brochures, as well as a good measure of patience and agility, and an ample dash of what the author calls "itchy feet syndrome" and, importantly, sense of humor.

A favorite piece is that tale about the author getting lost in Marseilles, taking the wrong train, leaving the husband behind, all the time fidgeting and panicking in her seat as the train moves toward heaven-knows-where. She begins to visualize a headline in Le Monde which goes, "Lady Meets Husband After Thirty Years of Separation in a Train Station at Marseilles." Another one is the author miserably turned equestrienne, in Mt. Bromo as she however rides triumphantly toward a sunrise at Surabaya.

### Traveler

Alice Sun-Cua is veritably, a traveler, not tourist. The traveler immerses herself at least for the moment, and blends with, the scene, picks up parts of the places and leaves part of herself as well; the tourist skims through destinations, hopping in and out of airports, and hotels, leaving nothing of himself in every place he skims through except a sizeable part of his billfold.

The author speaks about moments of getting lost and finding, which she weaves into her tales as all parts of the travelling pattern the getting lost and the finding, always of course, the finding, since one cannot really get lost in this one planet where all share affinities and speak the same heart's language. We feel this in each page of the tale and the travel. The different places are after all nothing but extensions of each other. Quoting the author, "One is here is also there and elsewhere," and each spot is an entering and exiting into. So no one really gets lost, this the reader is made to feel, even in the strangest place.

The author describes these tales as inner journeys and not mere physical sojourns taken by her and Alex. As poet, she grasps at particulars and contemplates them into universals; picks up a moment, and colors it permanent. In the course of the travels, author-traveler affixes and reaffirms bonds, familial traditions, rediscovers old rituals and takes significant steps into herself, inhabiting her own inner spaces.

This is, repeat, enjoyable reading, better enjoyed slowly, exquisitely page by page, tale by tale, in dainty slow sips as one would a cup of café créme in a sidewalk café in Paris or a glass of pulled tea in Kuala Lumpur.

Add to the over-all distinction of the book, the excellent sketches of Ibarra Crisostomo who did the cover design and interior art.

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TURNING THIRTY

# New novels

MEET Matt Beckford, a successful man looking forward to turning 30. But when he splits up with his girlfriend, moves back home to his parents and revisits old schoolmates, turning a nice round age is not as simple as he expected. Then there's 27-year-old Libby, who is choosing between lovely, funny and completely broke Nick and irritating but loving investment banker Ed. These bright and moving characters are from Mike Gayle's "Turning Thirty" and Jane Green's "Mr. Maybe," some of the recommended reading selections for Valentine's at Page One at the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center.

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# Valentine's offerings at Page One

Banana Yoshimoto

PAGE One presents a diverse offering of novels, hobby and crafts books and romantic reading for Valentine's Day. The Philippine franchise of the international bookstore, located at the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center, recommends great literary finds like the EM Forster classic "A Room with a View" and Japanese author Banana Yoshimoto's first novel: "Kitchen." Both novels have since been translated into film but its written versions remain high on any reading list. With over 50,000 titles from international publishers, Page One provides a wider selection of books and magazines for reading and gift-giving pleasure.

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# Yeah, Scottish bard takes on Manila

**BY LITO B. ZULUETA**

**REVIEW**

FILIPINOS will have a good chance to check the direction British poetry is taking with the visit of Roddy Lumsden this month for the fifth annual Philippine-British Literary Conference. Lumsden is perhaps the youngest British poet to grace the conference. Born in 1966, he is young enough be affected by the stream of stimuli and concerns that reflects the restlessness of the younger generation; but also old enough as to endow the subjects of his poems with a quiet sense of irony that has none of the cynicism and in-your-face acridity that many young people mistake for realism and even wisdom.

The subjects of Lumsden's poetry are varied. His celebrated first collection, "Yeah Yeah Yeah" (1997, Bloodaxe Books), is notable for its diversity and reach. The poet writes about love, childhood, romantic disappointments, getting soused, faith, age and death. Unusual for one so young, he seems willing to rein in the impetuosity of his age by formalism. (The title poem, for example, is a Petrarchan sonnet.) The marriage of spontaneity in subject matter and technical control in craft is very interesting. It makes Lumsden something of an oddity—and a breath of fresh air. Here is a poet who is willing to take on the world by obeying the rules.

To be sure, Filipinos will encounter at first some difficulty with Lumsden's poems because of unfamiliar vocabulary and geography. He is Scottish for one, and his cultural references and diction can be as estranging as, say, the Irish poets. It would be interesting to hear him read his poems. On the page, they emit a certain plangent tactility that is perhaps Scottish brogue, at its most smacking.

### Poetic key

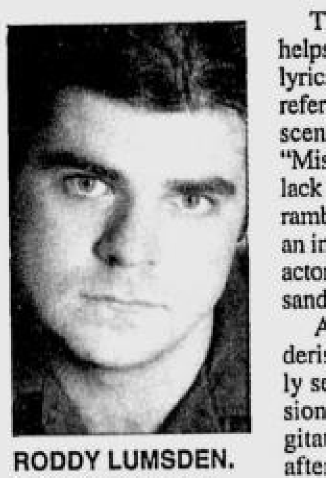
Perhaps the key to Lumsden's extremely varied subjects is eavesdropping. "Yeah," for instance, is prefaced by an exchange between an old woman and a toddler that the poet had overheard at a castle in Scotland's historic Fife town. Asked what he wished for when he threw a penny in the wishing well, the boy replied, "To make a big splash." The book therefore should be seen as an intensely personal diary of impersonal impressions that may have struck a cosmic chord in an intensely observant and sensitive man.

The documentation can be self-disparaging, even masochistic. "Then," which won first prize in the poetry postcard quarterly competition in 1995, has the speaker listening to a secret sound recording of him making love to his partner 10 years before. Hearing her love moans does not relive in him the ecstasy of the experience, merely the casualness, even emptiness, of it all. Left on, the tape also recorded the vacancy and the vacuity of the postlude, with the lovers unaware that they had "left behind this mop and mow mechanism/ of silence to which we may never return."

The poem "364" recalls the poet's last day in his 20s, when he came upon a scene of separation by complete strangers. "It is only in the moment of chaos/ we realise what the half-moon/ is a half of, what our breath is a gulp of." Alone, he was not one-half of any one. If a movie is to be made of what happened, "my character is younger, handsome/ and altogether missing from that scene."

The title poem continues with the rather merry self-laceration, in which the speaker feels an ominous flush of vanity when he hears from a third party how her former girl misses him sometimes. But the reporter rudely undermines his conceit. "All this she told me yesterday,/ Then she rolled over, laughed, began to do/ To me what she so rarely did with you."

YEAH YEAH YEAH
Roddy Lumsden


**RODDY LUMSDEN.** Watch out, he may eavesdrop on your conversation.

### Female chastisement

In "Prayer To Be with Mercurial Women," the speaker asks for chastisement from strong women. "And once a month, please let me be/ a punchbag. I'll take the blame/ for everything: I want to taste/ the stinging of a good slap." Truly the rod must not be spared; he needs a good spanking every now and then. "Help me avoid the kind of girl/ who means things when she says them,/ unless she's screeching, telling me/ exactly what I am. Amen."

The book's division may not be so neat but it helps. The first part, "Coming," contains mainly lyrics on failed relationships; "Swanning" seems a reference to inebriated flights and is filled with scenes of drunken revelry and chest-beating; "Missing" contains poems on faith, or a personal lack of it; and "Vanishing" is a rambling close to a rambling collection, preceded by an excerpt from an interview of Keanu Reeves in which the "cool" actor was reaching ecstatic heights over his favorite sandwiches.

Although sporting a ruggedly fashionable derisive attitude toward religion, Lumsden clearly sees the faith as worthy of poetry. "The Missionaries" makes fun of evangelizers by regurgitating obscene talks "of how our missionaries, after work/ would do it quick and quiet in the dark."

The poet is sport enough to take a potshot at his agnosticism. In "August (and Nothing After)," he writes about overhearing a couple talking about Roddy Lumsden not believing "in the soul." The poet can only smile and describe scenes of casual un-metaphysics. "And rising up from Easter Road, a cheer/ as Hibs go three down just before halftime." Sports has displaced the soul.

The final poem, "The Answers," is a graffiti of replies to invisible questions that, since unasked, are clearly matters of life and death: "to talk a good man up into his noose/ to watch him swing and cut him loose// to kick down or cross the hurdles of desire/ to interrogate the fire..." The melange and the aimlessness strangely accumulate into something definitive and final: "to be a proper thorn in the eye/ to go forth and multiply/ to love, to die."

In his appropriation of conversations overheard and ugly graffiti as stimuli to his poetic revelry, as well as his reworking of traditional forms and adapting them to contemporary needs and diction, Lumsden clearly draws from the example of the late Philip Larkin, still England's most important poet in the last half of the 20th century. And in his agnosticism and anonymous Christianity, Lumsden echoes the hard, crusty, down-but-not-out Christian realism of the Welsh pastor-poet R.S. Thomas, perhaps the most important living poet in the United Kingdom. Lumsden is a resonance of all of these poets and more.

*Roddy Lumsden, together with novelist Suzannah Dunn, will grace the fifth annual Philippine-British Literary Conference on Feb. 22-23 at the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies (UST-CCWS). Call the British Council at 914-1011 to -20 or the UST-CCWS at 731-3101 local 8281 (Tuesday to Saturday). The conference will have a Bacolod leg at the University of St. La Salle on Feb. 26-27. Call (034) 433-0078.*

**VETERAN** actress Rustica Carpio (left) plays Doña Teodora and Amy Rosales is Saturnina in "Calamba, 1888."

## 'Calamba, 1888' at PUP

THE ACCLAIMED play "Calamba, 1888," an adaptation of Severino Montano's "Parting at Calamba" by Amalia Cullarin Rosales, will be staged by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines on Feb. 15-24 as the university's initial cultural presentation in the run-up to its 100th founding on Oct. 1, 2004.

Directed by actor Dodi Dizon, the project is undertaken by the office of PUP president Dr. Ofelia M. Carague through the College of Arts and the University Center for Culture and the Arts.

The play depicts the poignant moments in 1888 when Dr. Jose P. Mercado Rizal felt the urgency to leave the Philippines for his safety and that of his family and friends. Ihman Esturco plays Rizal with Rustica Carpio as Doña Teodora Alonzo and Ermie Concepcion alternating. Three of Rizal's sisters—Saturnina (Amy Rosales), Soledad (Kathy Arguelles) and Trinidad (Lucy Valenzuela)—are featured in the play.

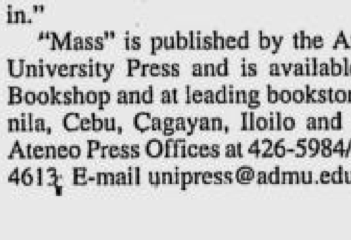
The play will be staged at the Bulwagang Balagtas of PUP's Ninoy Aquino Learning Resource Center. Gala performance is on Feb. 17, 5 p.m. Call 716-78-32 to -45 local 268/217/290.

## Book-signing at Solidaridad

NATIONAL Artist Nick Joaquin hosts a book-signing evening for "Mass for the Death of an Energy" by Renato E. Madrid on Feb. 17, 6 p.m., at the Solidaridad Bookshop at 531 Padre Faura, Ermita, Manila.

Award-winning author Renato E. Madrid, a.k.a. Msgr. Rudy Villanueva, is a highly prolific Cebu-based fictionist, who also teaches, composes and writes plays and short stories both in English and Cebuano.

"Mass" is a black comedy set in a small village in a large, hyperactive Cebuano town. Among the novel's colorful characters are a *tsokolate*-loving *presidente*, strong-willed women and a parish priest who thrives on gossip.



"Mass'" characters are all brought together by the staging of the *linambay*, a series of stage performances. The art form derives its name from the "movement of crabs when performed by non-crabs, and applied to choreographed fencing matches and like interludes of crowd-pleasing slow mutilation, so reminiscent of those fierce little animals' exertions to do each other in."

"Mass" is published by the Ateneo de Manila University Press and is available at Solidaridad Bookshop and at leading bookstores in Metro Manila, Cebu, Cagayan, Iloilo and Davao. Call the Ateneo Press Offices at 426-5984/6001 local 4612/4613. E-mail unipress@admu.edu.ph.

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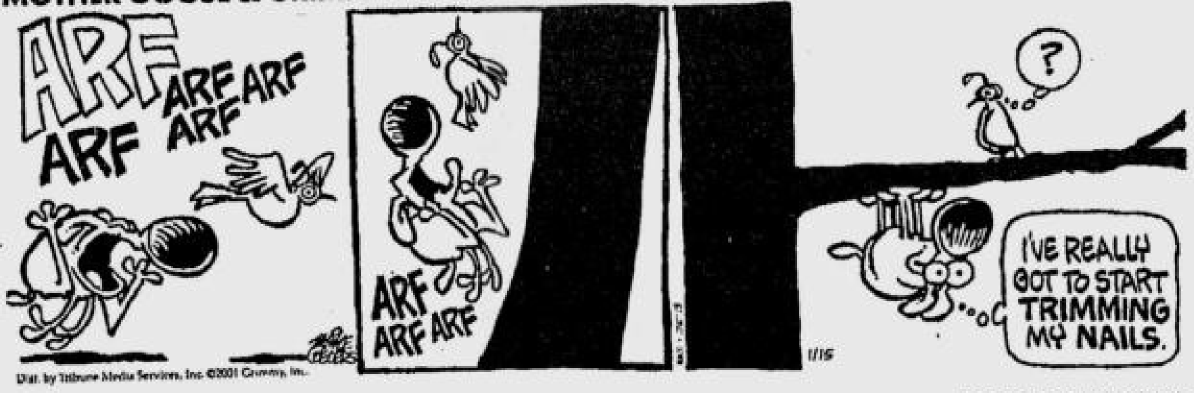
## MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF
ARF ARF ARF
?
I'VE REALLY GOT TO START TRIMMING MY NAILS.
1/15

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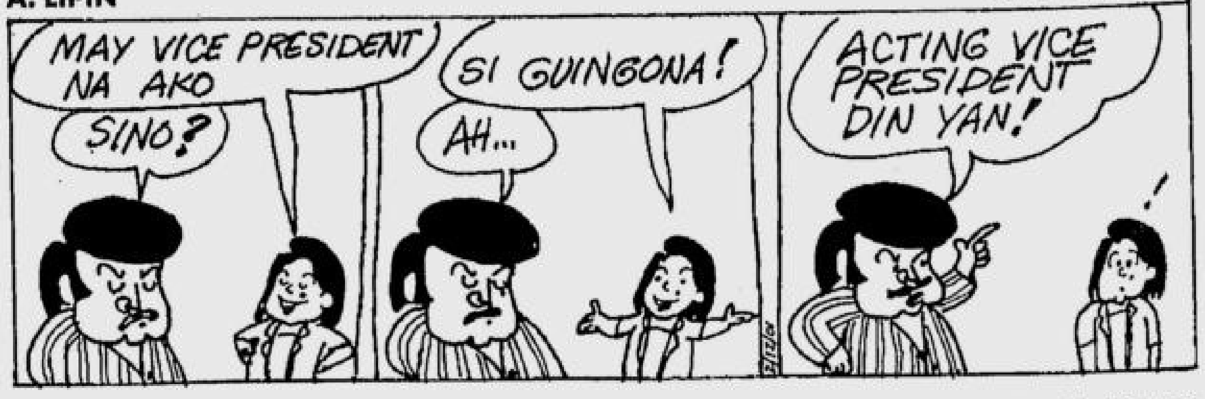
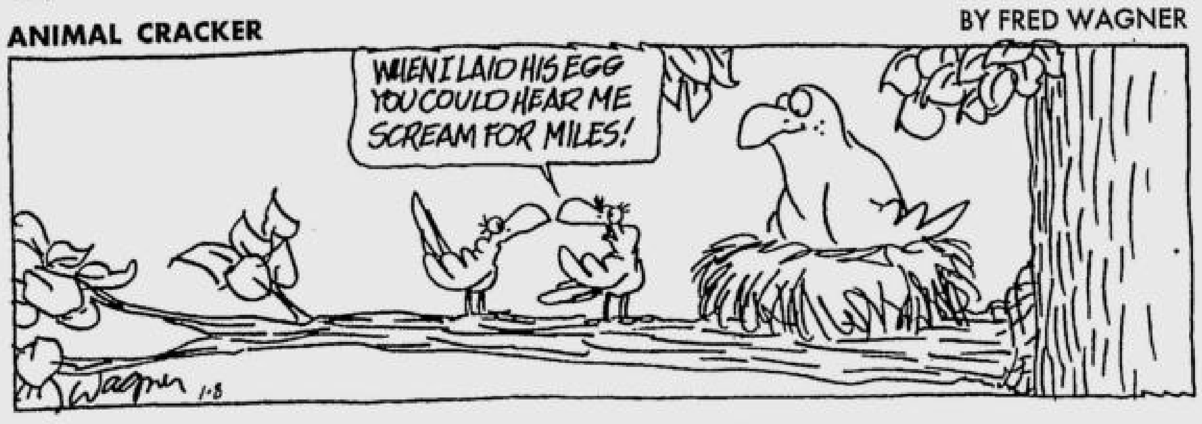
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAY VICE PRESIDENT NA AKO
SINO?
SI GUINGONA!
AH...
ACTING VICE PRESIDENT DIN YAN!

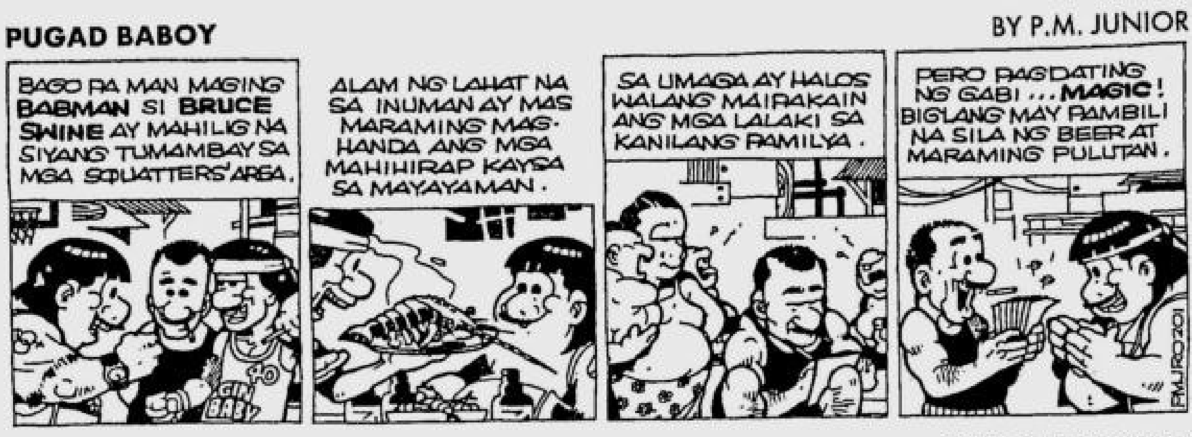
## ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


WHEN I LAID HIS EGG YOU COULD HEAR ME SCREAM FOR MILES!
Wagner 1-8

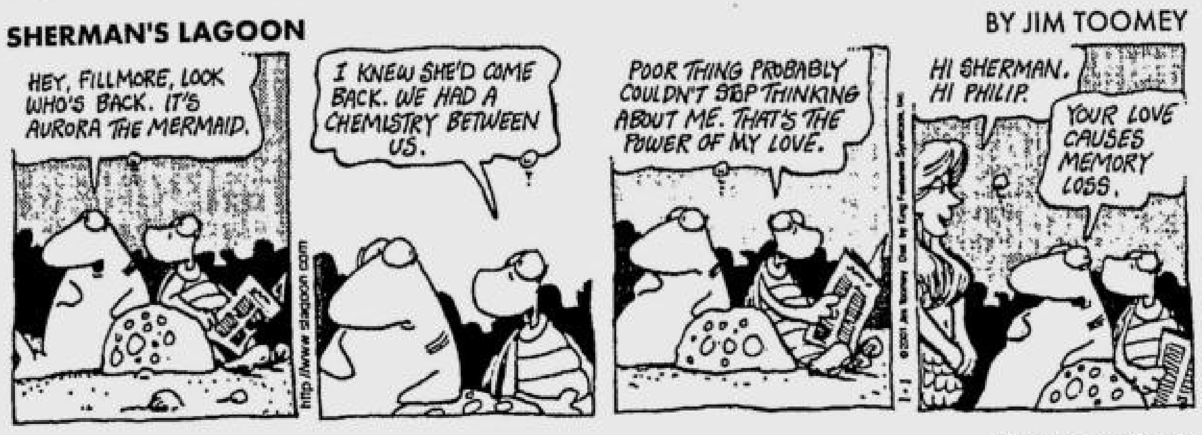
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BAGO PA MAN MAGING BABMAN SI BRUCE SWINE AY MAHILIG NA SIYANG TUMAMBAY SA MGA SQUATTERS' AREA.
ALAM NG LAHAT NA SA INUMAN AY MAS MARAMING MAGHANDA ANG MGA MAHIHIRAP KAYSA SA MAYAYAMAN.
SA UMAGA AY HALOS WALANG MAIPAKAIN ANG MGA LALAKI SA KANILANG PAMILYA.
PERO PAGDATING NG GABI ... MAGIC! BIGLANG MAY PAMBILI NA SILA NG BEER AT MARAMING PULUTAN.
PMJR0201

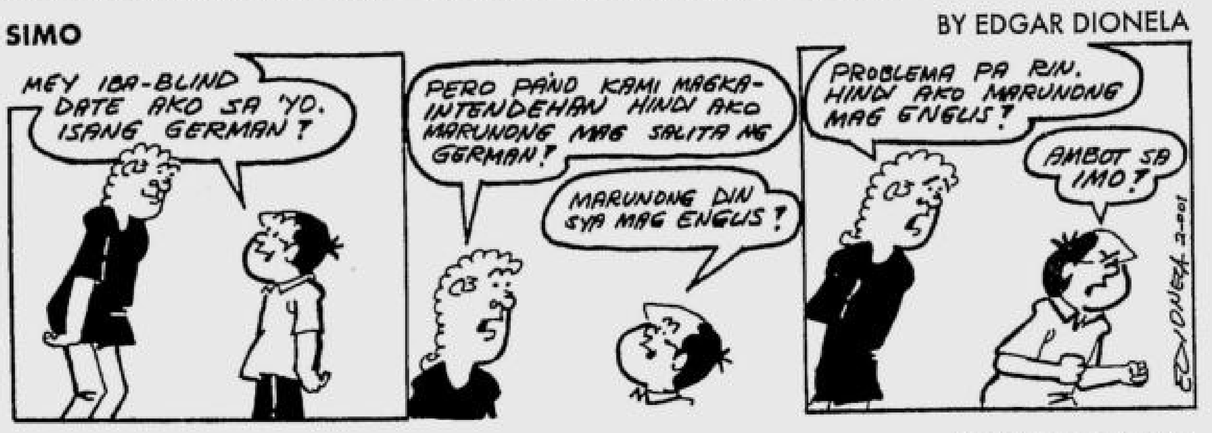
## SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEY, FILLMORE, LOOK WHO'S BACK. IT'S AURORA THE MERMAID.
I KNEW SHE'D COME BACK. WE HAD A CHEMISTRY BETWEEN US.
http://www.slagoon.com
POOR THING PROBABLY COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT ME. THAT'S THE POWER OF MY LOVE.
HI SHERMAN. HI PHILIP.
YOUR LOVE CAUSES MEMORY LOSS.

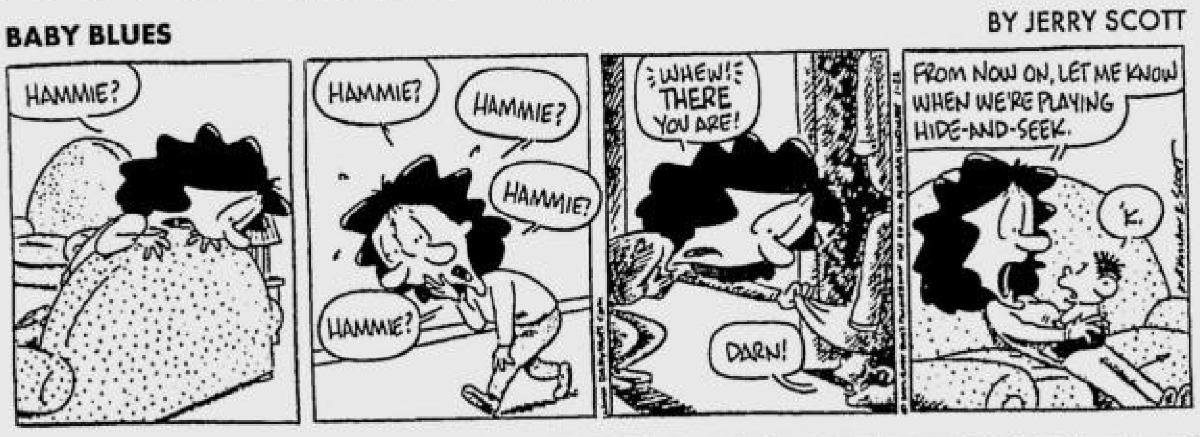
## SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MEY IBA-BLIND DATE AKO SA 'YO. ISANG GERMAN?
PERO PAANO KAMI MAGKAINTENDEHAN HINDI AKO MARUNONG MAG SALITA NG GERMAN!
MARUNONG DIN SYA MAG ENGLIS?
PROBLEMA PA RIN. HINDI AKO MARUNONG MAG ENGLIS?
AMBOT SA IMO?
DIONELA 2-01

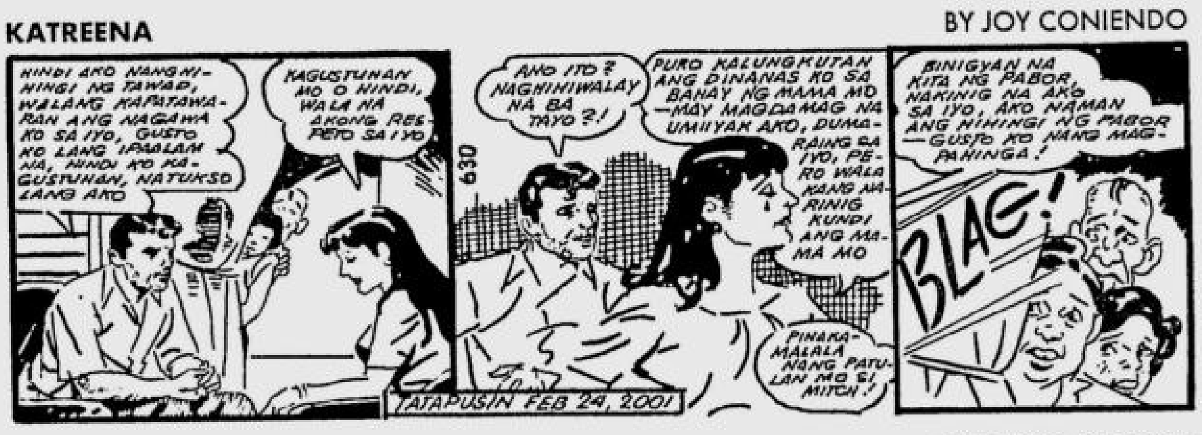
## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE?
HAMMIE?
HAMMIE?
HAMMIE?
HAMMIE?
WHEW! THERE YOU ARE!
DARN!
FROM NOW ON, LET ME KNOW WHEN WE'RE PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK.
'K.

## KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


HINDI AKO NANGHININGI NG TAWAD, WALANG KAPATAWARAN ANG NAGAWA KO SA IYO, GUSTO KO LANG IPAALAM NA, HINDI KO KAGUSTUHAN, NATUKSO LANG AKO
KAGUSTUHAN MO O HINDI, WALA NA AKONG RESPETO SA IYO
630
ANO ITO? NAGHIHIWALAY NA BA TAYO?!
PURO KALUNGKUTAN ANG DINANAS KO SA BAHAY NG MAMA MO —MAY MAGDAMAG NA UMIIYAK AKO, DUMARAING SA IYO, PERO WALA KANG NARINIG KUNDI ANG MAMA MO
PINAKAMALALA NANG PATULAN MO SI MITCH!
BINIGYAN NA KITA NG PABOR, NAKINIG NA AKO SA IYO, AKO NAMAN ANG HIHINGI NG PABOR —GUSTO KO NANG MAGPAHINGA!
BLAG!
TATAPUSIN FEB 24, 2001

## HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Chynna Phillips, Arsenio Hall, Judy Blume, Abraham Lincoln, Franco Zeffirelli, Arlen Specter, Christina Ricci

**Happy Birthday:** You have what it takes to dazzle the world this year. Put your heart and soul into your desired accomplishments, and you will find yourself in a leadership position. You have plenty to offer if you stand tall and present your ideas in a confident manner. Don't hesitate or second-guess yourself, and you will reach your goals. Your numbers: 6, 14, 20, 23, 34, 41

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Partnerships will be strained if one of you has been disagreeable. Try to be understanding and sort the situation out before things get out of hand.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Don't waste your time trying to get others to understand why you are doing things the way you are. Work diligently on your own and avoid being dragged into conversations that will lead to disagreements.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** You should be involved in activities that include children. Your creative input will be welcomed at any group gathering. Go shopping for that special outfit you've been wanting.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Your temper will be pushed to the limit if you allow family members to take you for granted. Disillusionment regarding your partnership will lead to moodiness.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Keep your thoughts to yourself. You may have been given false information that could damage someone's reputation. Find out the facts before you take action. You can excel if you are diplomatic.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Unforeseen expenses will cause worry. Talk to someone who can advise you of ways to improve your financial situation. You need attention today. Spend time with someone you love.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Disharmony will lead to anguish and minor illness. Don't let others force you to do or say things that will be upsetting. You need to pamper yourself for a change.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Pick your friends and acquaintances carefully. You mustn't let anyone talk you into spending your money on something you don't fully believe in.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** You will have a problem with colleagues. Try not to back yourself into a corner. You need to allow others to do their own thing. If you focus on your own goals, you will get ahead.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You should look into seminars that will help you obtain a more positive outlook. Be prepared to adjust your attitude for a more upbeat approach to life.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** You will have to be careful not to go over your budget. Take the time to help a friend in need, but don't go overboard. You can find solutions to existing problems, but you must act upon them if you wish to turn things around.

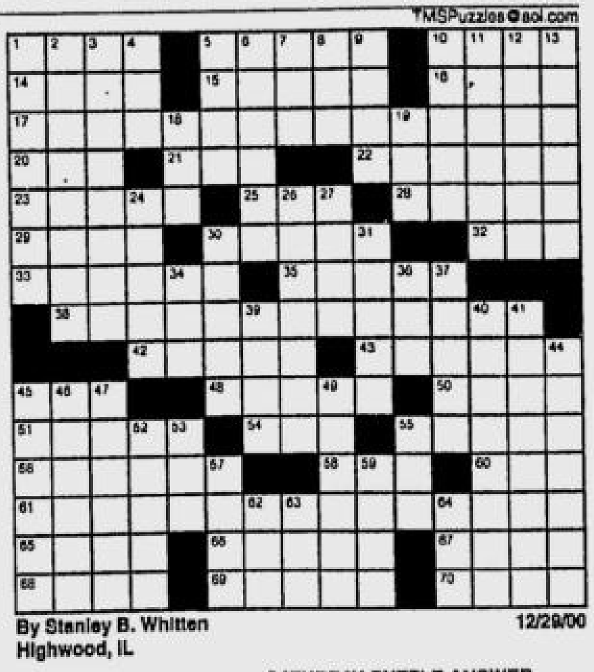
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You need some time alone with your lover. Take the lead and let your mate know how much you care. It's time you were getting serious and making a commitment.

**Birthday Baby:** You have spunk. Your extraordinary view of life will always lead you in interesting directions. You are curious, inventive and well-spoken. You are always a little ahead of your time.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

**ACROSS**
1 Floating vessel
5 Hollywood statuette
10 Swing around
14 First name in mysteries
15 Raccoonlike carnivore
16 Heavy weights
17 2000 Woody Allen film
20 Hog haunch
21 Corn unit
22 Mountain laurel
23 Faulty
25 Lamb's mom
28 Wee
29 __ up (restrained)
30 Pac. pact
32 Toothy deg.
33 Employ
35 Belt
38 1955 Hitchcock film
42 Now __ talking!
43 Well, I'll be __!
45 Pointed tool
48 __ Alegre, Brazil
50 Barreled (along)
51 Ecru
54 Greek letter
55 Carpathian range
56 Spanish lady
58 Govt. power grp.
60 Make free (of)
61 Slots
65 Fruit's coat
66 Disc jockey's cue
67 Dueling sword
68 Mrs. Truman
69 Jeff and Rockwell
70 Greek peak


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16
17 18 19
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23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31 32
33 34 35 36 37
38 39 40 41
42 43 44
45 46 47 48 49 50
51 52 53 54 55
56 57 58 59 60
61 62 63 64
65 66 67
68 69 70

By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

12/29/00

**DOWN**
1 Form anew
2 Military strength
3 Large wading bird
4 Part of GTE
5 80-year-old prefix
6 Evening party
7 Machine part
8 Consumed
9 Moranis or Mears
10 Lifted with light fingers
11 Appeared threateningly
12 Not nice
13 Compositions
18 Whitten or Brown
19 Stoolie
24 Dragila or Keach
26 Laundromat appliances
27 Blues singer James
30 Establish
31 Correct: Pref.
34 D.C. auditors
36 Exclamation of discovery
37 Nina's sister ship
39 Field yield
40 Self-indulgent sprees
41 Compounds with high resistivity
44 View from Mount Pisgah
45 Soak up
46 Ineffectual man
47 Tablecloths and sheets
49 Gossip unit
52 Prods
53 Go wrong
55 Decimal base
57 In a frenzy
59 Galley tools
62 Compass pt.
63 Marino or Fouts
64 __ volente

### SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | L | A | G | ■ | G | L | O | B | ■ | S | P | L | I | T |
| T | O | T | O | ■ | N | I | N | E | ■ | A | R | O | S | E |
| A | B | O | V | E | U | S | T | H | E | W | A | V | E | S |
| R | E | P | E | L | ■ | P | O | E | T | ■ | T | E | E | S |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | R | A | W | ■ | ■ | S | C | O | T | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| A | M | O | N | T | H | B | Y | T | H | E | L | A | K | E |
| L | I | V | ■ | E | I | R | E | ■ | ■ | R | E | V | E | L |
| A | L | E | S | ■ | R | O | A | S | T | ■ | D | I | V | E |
| M | A | R | C | H | ■ | ■ | S | H | O | O | ■ | S | I | C |
| O | N | T | H | E | W | A | T | E | R | F | R | O | N | T |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | E | X | I | T | ■ | ■ | T | O | E | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| P | R | I | M | ■ | S | T | A | G | ■ | L | U | N | G | E |
| R | I | D | E | T | H | E | W | I | L | D | S | U | R | F |
| O | P | E | R | A | ■ | N | A | V | E | ■ | E | D | I | T |
| F | E | A | S | T | ■ | D | Y | E | D | ■ | D | E | N | S |

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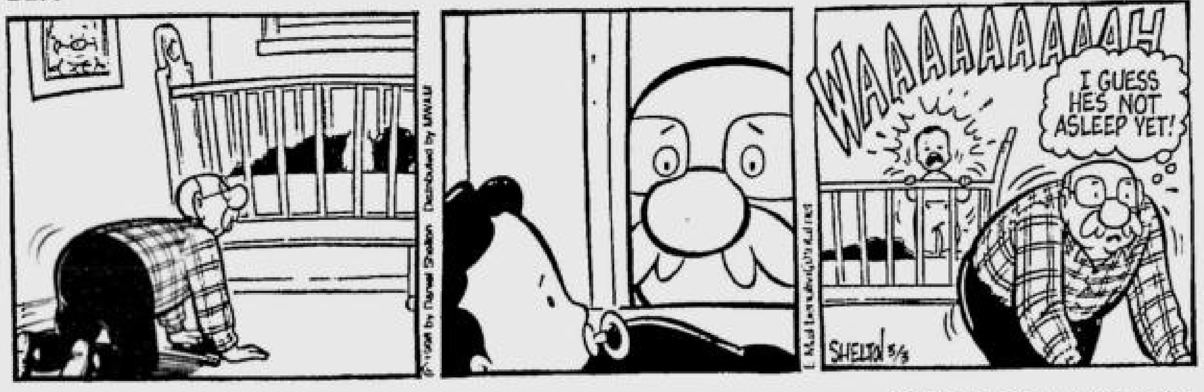
12/29/00

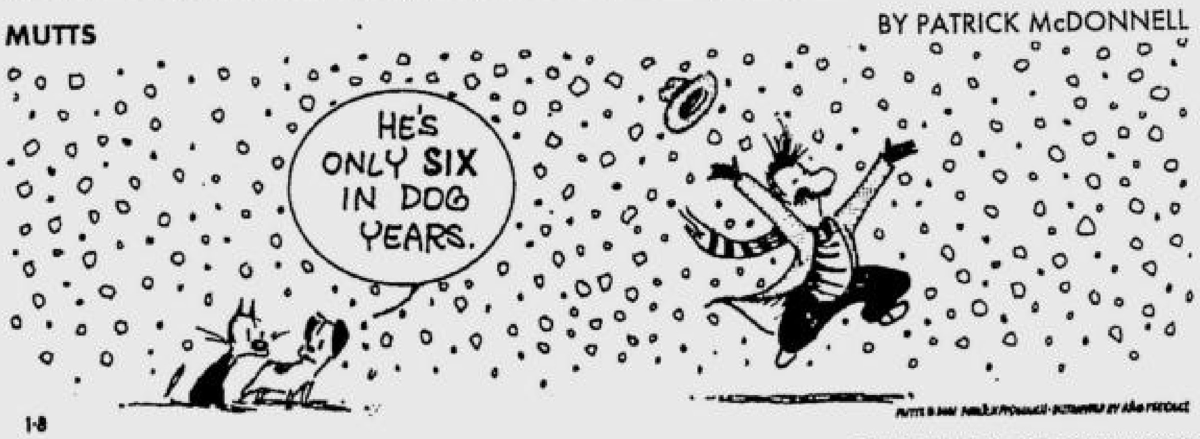
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WAAAAAAAAAH
I GUESS HES NOT ASLEEP YET!
SHELTON 5/5

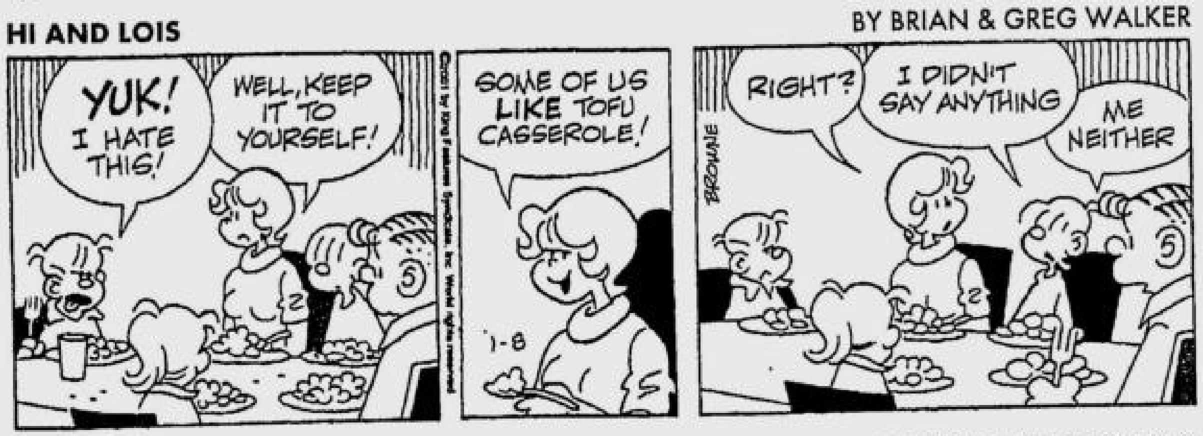
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HE'S ONLY SIX IN DOG YEARS.
1-8

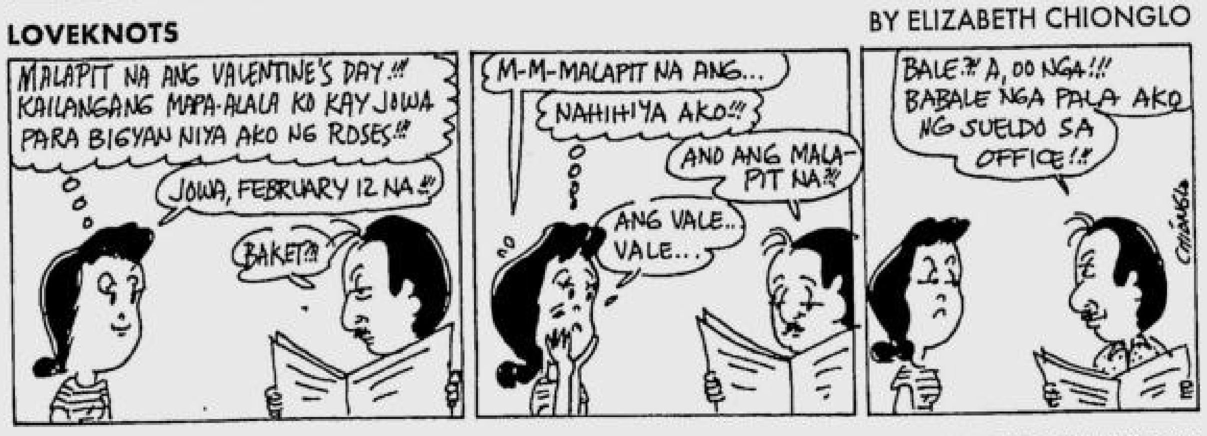
## HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


YUK! I HATE THIS!
WELL, KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!
SOME OF US LIKE TOFU CASSEROLE!
1-8
RIGHT?
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING
ME NEITHER
BROWNE

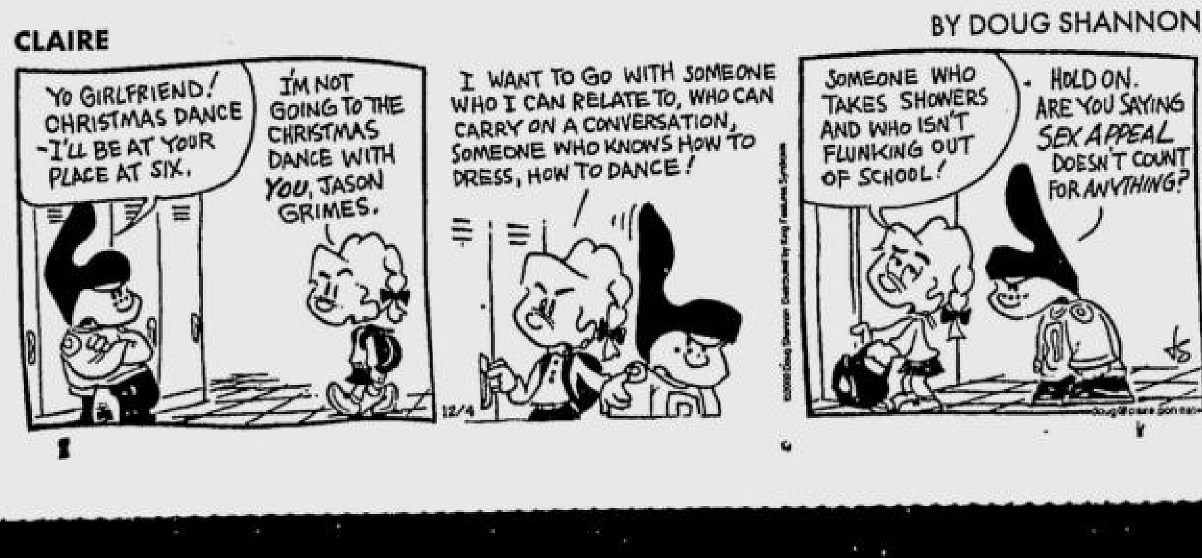
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MALAPIT NA ANG VALENTINE'S DAY!!! KAILANGANG MAPA-ALALA KO KAY JOWA PARA BIGYAN NIYA AKO NG ROSES!!!
JOWA, FEBRUARY 12 NA!!!
BAKET?!!
M-M-MALAPIT NA ANG...
NAHIHIYA AKO!!!
AND ANG MALAPIT NA?!!
ANG VALE.. VALE...
BALE?! A, OO NGA!!! BABALE NGA PALA AKO NG SUELDO SA OFFICE!!
CHIONGLO

## CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


YO GIRLFRIEND! CHRISTMAS DANCE -I'LL BE AT YOUR PLACE AT SIX.
I'M NOT GOING TO THE CHRISTMAS DANCE WITH YOU, JASON GRIMES.
I WANT TO GO WITH SOMEONE WHO I CAN RELATE TO, WHO CAN CARRY ON A CONVERSATION, SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HOW TO DRESS, HOW TO DANCE!
12/4
SOMEONE WHO TAKES SHOWERS AND WHO ISN'T FLUNKING OUT OF SCHOOL!
HOLD ON. ARE YOU SAYING SEX APPEAL DOESN'T COUNT FOR ANYTHING?

# Ballet Manila fires up Russian winter festival

(From page E1)

zine just before the group performed in St. Petersburg. "I've seen them on newspapers, magazines, television...They're everywhere!")

BM's "excursion" to the Kirov (now back to its imperial name, Marinsky Ballet) and its affiliated school, the Russian Academy of Ballet (formerly the Vaganova Choreographic Institute), had been Macuja's long-cherished dream. The company, which celebrates its sixth anniversary this month, has been lauded as the strongest proponent of the Russian school of dance in the country today. From its inception, BM's artistic heads spared no cost in bringing in teachers, ballet masters and choreographers from St. Petersburg and Moscow to train the company in this formidable classical tradition.

## Welcome

The company's rigid discipline paid off tremendously, based on the enthusiastic response BM received during the festival. "Warm" would be an understatement. "Sizzling" is more like it.

"The audience was in ecstasy!" remarked the Krasnoyarsk Evening News on its headline article. After a glowing review, it closed: "We love you, Ballet Manila. Thank you for sharing your talents with us. You are the festival's gift to our people and you are always welcome here."

"Positive critiques like those are very heartening for these young dancers," observed artistic director Eric V. Cruz. "Especially when they come from the Russians, who know their ballet very well." Cruz, who had spent over 30 years touring the world as a danseur, choreographer and company head, knows only too well how snobbish the Russian audience can be about classical dance.

"They are very discriminating," he explained. "If they are not satisfied with your technique or your repertoire, they have no qualms about walking out in the middle of the show. You can't believe how relieved and overjoyed I am that BM was able to keep its audience in all our performances!" Keeping the audience was a modest way of putting it, considering the group consistently danced to a full house, and received spirited ovations at every stop.

Of course, behind the elation were hours of backbreaking travel and hours of rigid preparation, walking several kilometers in freezing temperature to get to their rehearsal studios and adapting to the slanted surface of the old theater stages. However, once the curtains rose, all signs of effort disappeared. Only grace remained.

Impresario Valery Kokorev, president of the Philippine-Russian Friendship Society, and the Vizit Agency, through coordinator Vladimir Galakhov, were already talking about a return engagement even before the group completed their final concert. Not only was Ballet Manila the darling of local critics, it also enjoyed brisk box-office returns. This writer personally witnessed how angry balletomanes stormed the director's office at Mussorgsky (Mali) Theater in St. Petersburg, demanding more tickets to the one-night-only gala concert! All seats, including improvised ones that lined the aisles, had sold out hours before the show.

## Ethnic chic

For its Russian tour, BM brought a colorful repertoire of ethnic-inspired choreographic pieces created by Filipino dance artists Agnes Locsin, Hazel Sabas, Ric Culalic, Manuel Molina, Jojo Lucila and Tony Fabella. Displaying a panorama of Philippine culture from North to South, the dancers captivated the audience with our rich and exotic traditions, rendered in classical technique.

At every stop, the company was feted with a cocktail reception hosted by festival organizers, theater top brass, as well as officials of the Philippine embassy headed by Ambassador Jaime Bautista and Consul Pedro Chan in Moscow and honorary consul Andrei Fursenko in St. Petersburg. Here, accolades were heaped upon the 20-member delegation, coupled with hopes that they would return soon and bring Philippine pride back to the Russian stage.

## Full circle

For Macuja, however, the most memorable compliment came from her beloved teacher, Merited Artist of Russia Tatiana Alexandrovna Udalenkova, who went to see her backstage after six curtain calls in St. Petersburg to say that the dancers "surpassed expectations."

"The boys were excellent," added Madame Udalenkova, citing this quality as the mark of a superior standard of training. Former Kirov soloist and now company teacher Ira Sitnikova agreed: "The dancers are young but very professional. Their schooling is impressive. You can see the imprint of Macuja in everyone!"

People's Artist of Russia Serguei Vasielivich Vikulov, former premier danseur of the Kirov and one of BM's guest ballet masters, was beside himself with pride. During the group's performance at Mussorgsky Theater, he entertained VIPs at the lobby, regaling everyone with praises for the group and revealing plans of doing the world premiere of his full-length ballet, "Romeo and Juliet," in Manila this September. After the show, he presented Macuja with a bouquet of roses at her dressing room and sought out the dancers to give each one of them a big, paternal hug.

Despite the overwhelming acclaim, however, the young dancers knew in their hearts—as Macuja realized when she chose to continue her dancing career Manila in 1988—that there was still no place like home. As their grueling, two-week tour came to a close, the excited ballerina was only too happy to be reunited with her children, Missy and Mac, and husband, Fred Elizalde, whose photographs were proudly passed around among Russian friends and colleagues.

Before she left St. Petersburg, feelers were sent to Macuja about the possibility of guesting with the Kirov in the near future, following a meeting with its ballet director. Although she declined to discuss it at length, the ballerina's eyes sparkled at the thought. "If it actually happens, I hope my children will be old enough to watch. Then, I could really say that I've come full circle!"

**RETURNING** to her former dressing room inside the historic Kirov Theater, Lisa Macuja-Elizalde takes BM on a tour with her Kirov Theater mentor Galina Petrovna Kekisheva.

**LISA** Macuja-Elizalde goes down memory lane as she poses with her former teacher, Tatiana Udalenkova, at the main classroom of the Russian Academy of Ballet (formerly Vaganova Choreographic Institute).

ULTIMATE TOURS
with
The Clique Traveler
HOLY WEEK GETAWAYS
APRIL 11-15, 2001

- **SPRING HOLIDAY IN KOREA (US$799)**
Stay at Lotte World and visit Kyongbok Palace, the National Folklore Museum, Pukak Skyway, Seoul Tower and the Presidential Blue House, Namson Lookout, and much more! Shop at Dongdaemun Fashion Market and at Itaewon plus visit the Korean Folk Village and the Everland Theme Park!
- **BAGUIO/MT DATA/SAGADA (PhP 9,000)**
The cool, rarified heights of Mountain Province beckon the promise of romance amidst evergreen forests 7,200 feet above sea level. Well-paved trails and dirt roads wind through terraced slopes planted with rice and vegetables. This rugged untamed land provides the perfect backdrop for Sagada, with its fascinating caves and hanging coffins, striking rock formations and natural pools.
- **CEBU & BOHOL ADVENTURE (PhP 16,500)**
Cebu's bustling economy and Mactan's rustic life will show its many facets in this tour. As well, there will be time for some self-indulgence in the shopping bargains of Cebu's fine handicrafts. Then explore Bohol as we take you to the Chocolate Hills and a rainforest where you can see the world's smallest monkey, known as the "tarsier". Spend overnight at the enchanting Panglao Island and take a romantic ride on Loboc River.

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